

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR & ALDERMEN
CITY OF NEWPORT, TENNESSEE
REGULAR SESSION
MAY 12, 2015**

April 14, 2015

The City of Newport Board of Mayor and Aldermen met in the Newport City Hall Council Chambers on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 at 5:45 p.m. in Regular Session.

Rev. Alvin Watts led the invocation. Chief of Police Maurice Shults led the Pledge to the Flag.

The following officials were present: Mayor Connie Ball, Vice Mayor Mike Proffitt, Alderman Jeff Fancher, Alderman Roger Gribble, Alderman Mike Hansel, Alderman Bobby Knight, City Administrator James Finchum, and City Attorney Terry Hurst.

Mayor Ball declared a Quorum.

Mayor Ball asked due to the heavy volume of people that cell phones be turned off. Mayor Ball stated the meeting would maintain order with no disruptions. Mayor Ball stated for the record there is no attention to sell the Tanner building or to give the grammar school to the county. Mayor Ball stated he wanted to clear up the rumors that have surfaced before the meeting got started. Citizen's comments will be at the end of the meeting as usual. Mayor Ball asked for any comments concerning the budget and tax increase to wait to speak at next month's public hearing. Alderman Gribble stated at last month's meeting we voted to do citizens comments at the beginning of the meeting. I think the minutes are incorrect. Mayor Ball replied we did not vote. Alderman Gribble stated that Mayor Ball agreed for the citizen's comments to be at the beginning of the meeting. Mayor Ball responded that he said we would look at it. Mayor Ball stated, "I run the meetings and we're leaving them (citizen's comments) at the end of the meeting." Alderman Gribble asked to go back and look at the video. Mayor Ball asked James Finchum if the Board voted on this issue with a response of no. Alderman Gribble told Mayor Ball, "you said you agreed we should do it." Mayor Ball responded by saying we're leaving it at the end.

District Attorney Jimmy Dunn spoke on behalf of the family of the "Ragan House." Mr. Dunn stated the family would like to donate this cabin to Newport. The cabin comes with lots of history of Cocke County dating back to 1861 when Captain Ragan lived there. This cabin is now located in Basinger Hollow.

Cocke County Mayor Crystal Ottinger asked to speak to the Board concerning the letter that was published in the newspaper regarding given the grammar school to the county. Alderman Gribble responded by reading a letter that Finance Director Tina Matthews had sent to the Board. City Administrator James Finchum explained in the budget workshop I made a statement then that the analysis was not a proposal. That list in the letter was if there was no increase in revenue down the road there was a list of things to look at losing including a full time fire department and the animal shelter. There was never a proposal to give the grammar school to the county or sell the Tanner building. Mr. Finchum stated this was a misunderstanding that was not intentional. Mayor Ball asked if the City was liable for the building expense. Mr. Finchum explained if ever the City got to the state of letting the grammar school go to the county it should be put on referendum to let the voters chose, not the City Council.

Alderman Fancher spoke of the reckless spending in the past. Alderman Fancher stated he wanted to make Newport a better place. Alderman Fancher stated some of the employees haven't had a raise in pay in 10 to 12 years. Alderman Fancher stated 14 years of not raising taxes is beyond stupidity and it doesn't make sense. Vice Mayor Proffitt stated the people voted us in to do a job and the Board is doing what we think is best.

Minutes

April 14, 2015 Regular Session

Alderman Gribble stated he thought the minutes were incorrect on page 7. Alderman Fancher read the section, "Alderman Gribble asked for the citizen's comments to be moved to the beginning of the meeting to get the peoples input before voting." Alderman Gribble stated there was a portion left out of the minutes. Mayor Ball replied none of the Board members wanted the citizen's comment at the beginning of the meeting. Alderman Gribble stated, "you set the agenda. I asked you and you said yes." Mayor Ball replied the paper was incorrect by saying we voted on this issue and we didn't. Alderman Gribble stated remember what you said. It's on the video. Mayor Ball replied this is what we're doing and I'm carrying on with the meeting.

Motion by Alderman Hansel and second by Vice Mayor Proffitt for minutes of the April 14, 2015 Regular Session to be approved as submitted.

Vote was 4-1. Mayor Ball declared the motion passed and approved.

Proclamations and or Recognition of Citizens by the Mayor

Chief of Police Maurice Shults presented Detective Derrick Webb with the employee of the month for the month of May.

Communications from the City Administrator

City Administrator James Finchum asked for permission from the Board to sell city owned surplus properties. Mr. Finchum said he would like to put the asking price on the for sale signs. Mr. Finchum has been working with Alderman Knight on the recommendation of the selling price. Alderman Knight stated the City could get fifty cents on the dollar for what the city paid for the properties. City Attorney Terry Hurst recommended a vote to waive the rules and add this to the agenda.

Motion by Alderman Fancher and second by Vice Mayor Proffitt to suspend the rules and add to the agenda permission for City Administrator James Finchum to sell city owned surplus properties.

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

Finance Director Tina Matthews reported of two organizations asking for donations that were not added to the budget: Senior Citizens with no amount and Helen Ross McNabb asking \$15,000. Alderman Fancher recommended leaving out of this year's upcoming budget. Alderman Gribble asked for a one time donation of \$50 from each Board member but not in the budget.

The debt policy was provided in the City Council books for review by the Board. The Newport Grammar School budget was put in a packet for the Board because the budget was too big for their books.

Appointment of Boards, Commissions, and Committees

Reports from Committees, Members of Council, & Other Officers

Cathy Moscato with the Tanner Preservation Alliance gave a report. Ms. Moscato asked permission from the Board for a fund raiser on August 6th with the Tennessee Picnic at the Tanner building parking lot. The Tanner Preservation Alliance has insurance policy.

Motion by Alderman Fancher and second by Alderman Hansel to suspend the rules and add to the agenda permission for Tanner Preservation Alliance to have a fund raiser on August 6th at the Tanner building parking lot.

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

Old Business

New Business

1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-01 Budget Amendment for the City of Newport

Consideration of 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-01 Budget Amendment for the City of Newport.

Motion was made by Alderman Hansel and second by Alderman Fancher to approve 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-01 Budget Amendment for the City of Newport.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	AYE
Alderman Hansel	AYE
Alderman Knight	AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt	AYE

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

1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-02 Budget Amendment for the Newport Grammar School

Consideration of 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-02 Budget Amendment for the Newport Grammar School.

Motion was made by Alderman Gribble and second by Alderman Knight to approve 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-02 Budget Amendment for the Newport Grammar School.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	AYE
Alderman Hansel	AYE
Alderman Knight	AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt	AYE

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

1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03 City of Newport Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Consideration of 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03 City of Newport for Fiscal Year 2015-2016. Alderman Gribble asked if the City of Newport and Newport Grammar School is required to be voted on together. Alderman Gribble thinks it should be separated due to some Board members may want to vote for one budget and not the other.

Motion by Alderman Fancher and second by Alderman Hansel to suspend the rules and add to the agenda to vote for the budgets separately.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	AYE
Alderman Hansel	AYE
Alderman Knight	AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt	AYE

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

Mr. Finchum asked to move 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-04 Capital Project Fund with the voting of the budgets.

Resolution #2015-08 Tax Anticipation Note

Consideration of Resolution #2015-08 Tax Anticipation Note not to exceed \$600,000. Mr. Finchum reported this resolution was needed to start taking bids.

Motion was made by Alderman Hansel and second by Alderman Knight to approve Resolution #2015-08 Tax Anticipation Note not to exceed \$600,000.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	NAY
Alderman Hansel	AYE
Alderman Knight	AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt	AYE

Vote was 4-1. Mayor Ball declared the motion passed and approved.

TDOT Highway Maintenance Contract

Consideration of TDOT Highway Maintenance Contract with the City of Newport.

Motion was made by Alderman Gribble and second by Alderman Fancher to approve TDOT Highway Maintenance Contract with the City of Newport.

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

Parade Permit Empower Cocke County

Consideration of parade permit from Empower Cocke County with a request to waive the \$250 fee.

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Proffitt and second by Alderman Knight to approve request of parade permit from Empower Cocke County with the \$250 fee waived.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	AYE
Alderman Hansel	AYE
Alderman Knight	AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt	AYE

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

Discussion of 24/7 Yard Sales and Signage Issues on Tobacco Stores

Discussion of 24/7 yard sales and signage issues on tobacco stores in the City was brought up by Alderman Fancher. Alderman Fancher stated he has received many calls concerning cleaning up the City. The excess signage on the tobacco stores are an eye sore. People having 24/7 yard sales covering up their items at night is a business. The down town vacant buildings at least wash the windows. Planning Director Mark Robinson stated he had talked with property owners and sent out letters as well. After much discussion, Mayor Ball suggested letting the Planning Commission look in on these issues to change regulations.

Discussion of Cabin Donation Proposal

Discussion of cabin donation proposal was decided by the Board for City Administrator James Finchum to research and bring back to the Board.

Sell of City Owner Surplus Property

Consideration allowing City Administrator James Finchum to sell city owned surplus properties. Mr. Finchum will start with 3 properties.

Motion was made by Alderman Fancher and second by Alderman Hansel to approve allowing City Administrator James Finchum to sell city owned surplus properties

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

Separating Ordinance #2015-03 City of Newport Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

City Attorney Terry Hurst separated the budgets as Ordinance #2015-03-A City of Newport for Fiscal Year 2015-2016 and Ordinance #2015-03-B Newport Grammar School for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03-A City of Newport Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Consideration of 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03-A City of Newport for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

Motion by Alderman Hansel and second by Alderman Knight to approve 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03-A City of Newport for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	NAY
Alderman Hansel	AYE
Alderman Knight	AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt	AYE

4-1. Mayor Ball declared the motion passed and approved.

1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03-B Newport Grammar School Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-2016

Consideration of 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03-B Newport Grammar School for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

Motion by Alderman Hansel and second by Alderman Knight to approve 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-03-B Newport Grammar School for Fiscal Year 2015-2016.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	AYE
Alderman Hansel	AYE
Alderman Knight	AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt	AYE

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

1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-04 Capital Project Funds

Consideration of 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-04 Capital Project Funds.

Motion by Alderman Hansel and second by Alderman Fancher to approve 1st Reading of Ordinance #2015-04 Capital Project Funds.

Roll Call

Alderman Fancher	AYE
Alderman Gribble	NAY

Alderman Hansel AYE
Alderman Knight AYE
Vice Mayor Proffitt AYE

4-1. Mayor Ball declared the motion passed and approved.

Bids, Purchases, and Expenses

Citizens Comments

Preston Brooks commented of the approval of the cabin donation. Mr. Brooks spoke of tourism in the county.

Carlene Robinson asked about the vote for the Tanner Preservation Alliance fund raiser. Attorney Hurst asked for a motion and vote on this request.

Motion by Alderman Fancher and second by Alderman Gribble to approve the request from Tanner Preservation Alliance to have a fund raiser at the Tanner building parking lot on August 6, 2015.

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

Linda Parker asked how much do you project to make from the property sells and where will the money go. Mr. Finchum stated he didn't know. Ms. Parker asked for an educated guess. Mr. Finchum stated \$90,000 maybe. Mr. Finchum stated he would propose the money going back to the loan that was made to purchase the properties.

Wilma Stepp stated she was against the city raising taxes. Ms. Stepp said she thought there should be another way. Vice Mayor Proffitt stated the Board has tried. Ms. Stepp stated she didn't like the way Mayor Ball talked to Alderman Gribble. Mayor Ball replied I did what I had to do.

Scotty Gorrell stated he didn't like the idea of raising taxes for property owners. Mr. Gorrell stated if you don't have it, don't spend it. Vice Mayor Proffitt stated this situation happened before we got on Board.

Chief of Police Shults stated he has been a city tax payer since 1991 and a city employee since 1987. Chief Shults stated he supports the tax increase for his people on the police force to get a raise in pay.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board of Mayor & Alderman, **a motion was made by Vice Mayor Proffitt and second by Alderman Fancher** to adjourn.

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

Mayor Connie Ball

James Finchum, City Administrator

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