

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEOGA HELD IN
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS MUNICIPAL BUILDING 533 CHESTNUT
MAY 19, 2003, 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Gary A. Mercer and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Those present were: Commissioners Varner, Stewart, Russell, Warner, and Mayor Mercer.

MINUTES

Commissioner Warner made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Russell, to approve the regular and executive meeting minutes of May 12, 2003. Yeas, Commissioners Varner, Stewart, Russell, Warner, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATION

Todd Reardon was present to discuss his application for a Liquor License with the Council. Commissioner Warner questioned Reardon about his experience in this area. Reardon stated that he had previously tended bar. Commissioner Stewart asked about the hours he intended to be open for liquor business. Reardon said he would keep the bar on the south side and would not allow underage employees to serve at the bar. He said he would like to be open for business from 12:00 noon to midnight on weekends and 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. through the week. Mayor Mercer explained that the application was still in the Attorney's hands for review. Also, that there is presently no liquor license available. Mayor Mercer noted that although he is liquor commissioner he would rely on Council opinion. Mayor Mercer opened the floor for a motion to create a Class "D" license. No motion was forthcoming.

EXPLORER POST PROGRAM

Ronda and Justin Russell addressed the Council about the possibility of starting an Explorer Post Program through the emergency services of Neoga, including Fire, Ambulance and Police. They explained that the program would be open for fourteen to twenty year old males and females. They have liability insurance in the amount of one million dollars through the Explorer Post Program. The Russell's explained that Mattoon and Effingham have programs in place. When working with the ambulance department all basic training would be given. With the Police department they would learn fingerprinting and dispatching. It was explained that the Fire Department still has to approve the program at the Board level. Commissioner Warner asked about other communities and their participation in the program. Ronda Russell said that Greenup has several kids involved.

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Commissioner Varner asked if there were several kids interested. Russell explained that three were already interested but they had not publicized the program yet, once they do they expect several more. Ambulance Coordinator Alan Baker told the Council that each Explorer Candidate will be educated on HIPPA requirements; privacy requirements etc. Russell's asked permission from the Council to allow Explorer participation in the Ambulance and Police programs. Guidelines will be established for ability to participate in the programs. Mayor Mercer instructed the City Clerk check with the city insurance and the City Attorney to ensure that insurance coverage is in place and that there is no legal issues to be concerned with.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Economic Development Director Jonathan McKenzie was present to report to the City Council on the projects CCDC is presently working on. He reported on the following:

1. Have made application for a county wide tourism grant.
2. Clark, Edgar, and Cumberland County are working toward a telecommunication survey project to help bring high speed telecommunications to the region.
3. An Intern will begin working with CCDC in the office very soon.
4. CCDC will be holding a night meeting on June 19, 2003, in hopes that more people will be able to participate in the county economic development process.

RESOLUTION NO. 01-05-03

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A
CONTRACT FOR LEGAL SERVICES WITH GLENN .
BRADEN.

Commissioner Warner made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Varner, to approve Resolution No. 01-05-03. Yeas, Commissioners Russell, Stewart, Varner, Warner, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

Mayor Mercer told the Council that a part-time consulting position in the Springfield area has very recently been offered to him. He noted that he and Kay have given this much thought and consideration because of the chance to locate closer to their children and grandchildren who live in the Springfield area. Also, Mercer told the Council that they love Neoga, raised their children here, and this has been a very difficult decision but in the end felt they should not pass up this opportunity. Mayor Mercer told the Council that they would not be moving until late summer or early fall but wanted them to have plenty of notice and chance to review their options on filling the vacancy on the Council when he does resign.

Mercer explained that later this year when he resigns as Mayor the Council will need to appoint someone to take his position. Council members told Mayor Mercer they certainly regret losing him as Mayor. They noted how long he has worked toward the betterment of this community and feel Neoga will be the worse for his loss.

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FINANCE

BILLS

Commissioner Warner made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Russell, to approve the payment of the bills in the amount of \$28,847.06. Yeas, Commissioners Russell, Warner, Varner, Stewart, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

TREASURER'S REPORT

The previous months statement of fund balances was given to all council members. After review of the statement, Mayor Mercer ordered that the statement of fund balances be placed in the files of the City Clerk.

PUBLIC PROPERTY

CONTRACT FOR MOWING CEMETERY

Commissioner Varner made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Stewart, to approve renewal of the contract with White Lawn Service for mowing and maintenance of the Neoga Memorial Cemetery. Yeas, Commissioners Russell, Varner, Warner, Stewart, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

STREET'S AND ALLEY'S

Commissioner Warner reported that he met with Engineer Tom Overmyer with Daily & Associates and County Engineer Ben Bland to determine who is responsible for 6th street. It was discovered that the City is responsible from the west side of the overpass to Walnut and from Walnut to the City line it is the County's responsibility. We will need to give the design to the County for inclusion in their budget. Daily & Associates are preparing the design plans and they will be taking pavement test's and conducting average daily traffic counts. Might look at landscaping the street since the street is 70 feet wide. Additionally, the jurisdiction for Walnut Avenue was discussed with Bland he will get back to the City with his findings. Daily & Associates looked at the slurry seal on 10th and 7th streets. No suggestions for patching at this time. Commissioner Warner will contact the contractor on how to fix.

HEALTH & SAFETY

ESDA COORDINATOR

It was noted that there is still no replacement for the ESDA Coordinator. Commissioner Stewart will attend the next firefighters meeting to discuss this situation with them.

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DEMOLITION OF PROPERTIES

After discussion, Commissioner Stewart made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Russell, to proceed with advertising for bids for demolition of the property at 709 Grove. Yeas, Commissioners Stewart, Russell, Varner, Warner, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

Discussion was held on complaints received about rats coming from the property located at 634 Elm. After discussion, the City Clerk is to direct the Attorney to have the property at 634 Elm and the Quonset Hut located at 510 Walnut posted for demolition.

Commissioner Warner questioned whether the “gas price” sign off of the interstate for the Truck Stop was legal under the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Board is to be asked to review the sign Ordinance.

RECESS INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Stewart made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Varner, to move into executive session to discuss Section 2 (c)(1) the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body. Yeas, Commissioners Stewart, Varner, Warner, Russell, and Mayor Mercer. Nays, none. Motion carried. 5-0

RECONVENED AND ROLL CALL

This meeting reconvened on motion by Commissioner Varner, seconded by Commissioner Stewart. Those present for roll call were: Commissioners Russell, Stewart, Varner, Warner, and Mayor Mercer.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Warner made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Russell, to adjourn the regular meeting of May 19, 2003, at 9:30 p.m. Motion carried via voice vote.

Gary A. Mercer, Mayor

Patricia D. Ehrhart, MMC, City Clerk