



7019 Pleasant Ridge Road CR 4217 \* Coffee City, TX 75763 Phone: (903) 876-3414 \* Fax: (903) 873-2433

**CITY OF COFFEE CITY**  
**City Council Special Called Meeting Minutes**  
**February 6, 2023 @ 6 pm**  
**7019 CR 4217/Pleasant Ridge Rd**  
**Coffee City, TX 75763**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A SPECIAL CALLED COUNCIL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF COFFEE CITY. TO BE HELD ON **MONDAY, February 6, 2023, at 6:00 PM AT THE COFFEE CITY HALL, 7019 CR 4217, COFFEE CITY, TEXAS.** FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS. THE CITY COUNCIL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MEET IN A CLOSED SESSION ON ANY AGENDA ITEM SHOULD THE NEED ARISE AND APPLICABLE PURSANT TO AUTHORIZATION BY TITLE 5, CHAPTER 551, OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE.

**Council Members**

Jeff Blackstone – Mayor (P)

Carrie Ousley - Place 3 (P)

Ruthie Seward - Place 1 (P)

Keith Skender - Place 4 (P)

Marquis Castleberry – Mayor Pro-Tem (P)

Ollie Harmon - Place 5 (P)

**1. Call Meeting to Order:**

*Mayor Jeff Blackstone called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.*

**2. Roll Call and Announce if quorum is present:**

*Mary McDonald did roll call and announced that a quorum was present.*

**3. Opening remarks:**

*Mr. Blackstone thanked members of the community, Keith, Mr. McBride, Mr. Vrba, Mr. Merritt & Mr. Hanks for coming out on Saturday and helping cleaning up all the reminder brush that was previously cleaned up after the storm.*

**4. Consider and Act upon approving items 5 & 6.**

**5. Approving City financials for January 2023.**

*Mrs. Seward asked about the auto expense and Mary McDonald explained that it was for tires on two units, oil changes on three units, inspection & registration on three units. Mrs. Ousley asked about the insurance and if it was the annual fee. Mary McDonald explained that it was the liability insurance that it paid quarterly. Mrs. Seward asked if the city ran off propane. Mary McDonald explained that it was only part of the building that ran off propane. Carrie Ousley made a motion to approve the January 2023 city financials. Ruthie Seward second the motion. Motion carries.*

**6. Approving meeting minutes for the January 9, 2023 council meeting.**

*Ruthie Seward made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the January 9, 2023 meeting. Ollie Harmon second the motion. Motion carries.*

**7. Consider and Act upon approving the police department expenditures on equipment for units and**

**request reimbursement from the grant that was previously approved and has been granted.**

*Mr. Blackstone asked if Chief Portillo was here to explain. Mary McDonald stated that he had left. Mr. Blackstone suggested that we move this item to the bottom to wait for chief to return.*

*Item #7- acted upon after Item # 10 now that Chief Portillo is present.*

*Chief Portillo stated that this was for the JAG grant that was for \$19, 000 that was already granted and issued to us and that they have to spend the money and then send in a reimbursement to the grant. Mr. Blackstone asked how long it would take. Chief Portillo stated that it would be when Mary received the invoice and a check is issued and send over the reimbursement documents, he stated about 30 days to be reimbursed. Marquis Castleberry made a motion to approve the police department expenditures on equipment for units and request reimbursement from the grant that was previously approved and has been granted. Ruthie Seward second the motion. Motion carries.*

**8. Consider and Act upon reducing the posted speed limit on Hwy 155 and FM 3506.**

*Item moved to later in the meeting to await the arrival of Chief Portillo.*

*Item # 8 was acted upon after item # 10 & 7.*

*Mr. Blackstone stated that the map included in the packet shows what they are looking to do. He stated that on HWY 155 from one bridge to the other to lower it to 45 MPH. He stated that also that it is currently 60 MPH on CR 3506 and would like to have it reduced to 45 MPH from HWY 155 down to CR 4218 and then increase to 55 MPH all the way down to the 315 intersections. Chief Portillo stated that once they approve this TXDOT would review it and come back and say yes or no to the changes. Carries Ousley made a motion to consider and act upon reducing the posted speed limit on hwy 155 and FM 3506. Ruthie Seward second the motion. Motion carries.*

**9. Consider and Act upon reinstating previous City Ordinance # 2012-1105-001 regarding Flea Markets and Garage Sales.**

*Mr. Castleberry asked if this was a current ordinance. Mr. Blackstone stated that it was not at the moment. It was appealed in 2012. Mr. Blackstone asked if anyone noticed anything that would need to be revised. Mr. Castleberry asked if it stated anything about location. Mr. Blackstone stated that it did not. Mr. Blackstone stated that this ordinance limits the amount of days and how many times a year for a sale. Mrs. Ousley stated that she doesn't think a \$20.00 penalty is enough and maybe up it to \$60.00. Mr. Blackstone stated that they should have to come up to City Hall and receive a permit that will tell us location, times and dates and also anyone that operates with a sales tax ID. Mr. Skender stated that he would suggest anyone that was wanting to do business in the city would need to receive council approval first and keep safety in mind. Mr. Castleberry stated that his thoughts were that it needed to be amended. Mrs. Seward suggested that they approve reinstating the ordinance the way it is and amend it at a later date. Code enforcement officer, Officer Suzanne Stewart spoke on the city having one in place already for garage sales only and this ordinance would have the same consequences as the garage sale even though it includes flea markets. Mr. Blackstone asked if she was saying that the fine for a flea market should be higher as well as the permit for it. Lieutenant Raymond Stewart spoke on the more they delay on formalizing this ordinance they run the risk of being grandfathered in. He suggested that they quickly reinstate this after making the proper amendments. Officer Stewart also spoke on the need for people to file for permits with the city. Mrs. Seward stated that in 2002 the city required permits for things. Fire Chief, Christ Moore confirmed that and also stated that the city had done away with those in 2007. Keith Skender stated this ordinance should include resale shops, flea markets and garage sales. Mr. Blackstone suggested that a few of the members meet to discuss amendments just be sure not to form a quorum. Keith Skender made a motion to reinstate this ordinance to include resale, flea market and garage sale and local business within Coffee City need to have a permit and permission from the city and receive permission and have a safety walkthrough with Fire Chief. Ollie Harmon seconds the motion. Before motion carried, Keith Skender stated that we need to have a day that this will go into effect and he suggested Friday, February 11, 2023.*

*Mr. Blackstone stated that he would need to redo his motion and make it shorter. Ruthie Steward made a motion to accept this ordinance that is before us and place back into effect and later make amendments to it. Ollie Harmon second the motion. Motion carries.*

**10. Discussion: Review existing ordinance # 20170911 regarding substandard property abatement and consider any amendments to help properly enforce this ordinance.**

*Mr. Blackstone stated that this was just a discussion to look and see if any amendments are needed to this current ordinance. Mr. Skender asked if this was for trash in yards and if it included residential property only. Mr. Blackstone stated that it was for trash and it included residential and business property. Mr. Skender asked how this ordinance is working at the moment as far as enforcing it. Chief Portillo stated that our code enforcement was working on those today and issued some citations. He stated that she has files on each of these properties as she has been sending notices prior to issuing citations. Chief Portillo stated that he expresses to citizens that if they see something say something to him and he would be on it. Officer Stewart stated that they are welcome to email her at any time with an address that they would like for her to look at. Chief Portillo stated that after a citation is issued and they go to court and the judge finds them guilty and they pay their fine but still won't clean up and that's when the city comes in in allocates money to have it cleaned up then they levy on the property and put it up for auction and get some of the money back.*

*Discussion on this ended and Mr. Blackstone stated that they would now circle back to the items that were skipped now that Chief Portillo was present.*

**11. Discussion: Update on what information has been gathered by council in regards to animal control.**

*Mrs. Ousley stated that she made several phone calls in regards to animal control and spoken with the City of Chandler. Mr. Blackstone stated that it boils down to it would cost a minimum of \$50.00 to \$100.00 to house animals up to the three days. Mrs. Ousley also stated that Henderson County did tell her that if we were to have a dog bit, they would come out to assist but the way we are set up, we would have to have our own. Mr. Blackstone said that he had a local citizen that wanted to stay anonymous that would be willing to donate money to the city to be placed in a separate fund so that if they city does need to house animals, we could use that donated money for that. Mrs. Ousley asked how they would pick up the animals and Mr. Blackstone stated that is something that would need to be figured out. Mr. Blackstone stated that they would keep looking into this until they have a solution.*

**12. Discussion: Update on court files being up to date.**

*Mary McDonald stated that a judgment signed by the judge was missing from the files. She stated that the judge has created the judgement and now whenever a case is closed a judgement is printed and placed to the side for the judge to sign and its sealed with the court seal and filed away.*

**13. Discussion: Update on requesting reimbursements with original receipts.**

*Mr. Skender stated that he just wanted to confirm that we are receiving original receipts when a reimbursement request is submitted. Also asked about council signing off on invoices. Mr. Blackstone stated that he and Mr. Castleberry currently review and sign each invoice when signing checks. He also mentioned that they were not currently signing off on online payments. Mary McDonald stated that she would just start placing those paid invoices in the stack of checks so they can review them when they come to sign.*

**14. Discussion: Implementing a Warrant Division to the court to track down and collect FTA & citation fees.**

*Chief Portillo and Lieutenant Raymond Stewart discussed how the police department would create and enforce a warrant division. He also discussed that failure to appears were not currently being issued but we look to start issuing them once this division is created.*

**15. Fire Dept. Report:**

*Fire Chief Chris Moore was present and gave the fire department report on the number of calls that were received for the month of January.*

## **16. Police Dept. Report:**

*Chief John Jay Portillo was present and gave the report on calls that department responded to and discussed repairs to units.*

## **17. Municipal Court Report:**

*Mary McDonald gave the court report discussing the total amount of fines collected and the total of warrants cleared for the month of January.*

## **18. EDC Report:**

*GeoJan Hunter gave the EDC report. She stated that they held a public meeting in regards to the purchase of the property on Hwy 155 and FM 3506 and no citizens showed to dispute it. She then stated that after speaking with the mayor, they decided not to obligate themselves to the purchase of the property. They discussed having a real estate agent to represent the EDC on any future purchase of property.*

## **19. Open Forum:**

- Open Forum is limited to items currently on the agenda.
- Speakers must sign in 5 minutes before the beginning of the meeting.
- Speakers will be given 3 minutes to speak.

*Any person that is unable to attend and wishes to submit questions to the council can e-mail the questions to the City Secretary at [citysecretary@cityofcoffeecity.com](mailto:citysecretary@cityofcoffeecity.com)*

*Mrs. Blackstone stated that we had three people signed up to speak. First was Kimberly Vochatzer. Ms. Vochatzer spoke on her drainage issue and that a year ago it was established that it was the city's responsibility to put in a culvert. Mr. Blackstone stated that he knew fire chief and the county commissioner met and looked at it and were working on a game plan for getting it done. She stated that she has been paying for loads of dirt to keep from damage to her property and that she's asking that the city have the repairs done. Ms. Vochatzer asked what would happen if she had damage because the city hasn't completed the job. Mr. Blackstone stated that he would meet with the fire chief and get this taken care of and stated that this is an emergency situation that should come before filling pot holes.*

*Next, GeoJan Hunter spoke. Mrs. Hunter said she wanted to thank Officer Stewart and that she saw her in action today in the Highsaw addition.*

*Next, Greg Melcoch spoke. He stated he had a question about the volunteering officers and the fact that it is costing the city money having them covered on insurance. He stated that second, we are a town of three hundred people so why do we need a police force other than to take care of you guys, what is the benefit of it. He stated that we don't get money off of and that they don't carry themselves. Mr. Blackstone stated that he understood what he meant and understand more now with being a part of the council but they handle more than citations, they handle wrecks, theft. Mr. Melcoch stated that the fire department does too. Mr. Blackstone stated that they are volunteer and Mr. Melcoch stated that the police department is too. Mr. Blackstone stated that we have seven paid officers and a fulltime 24/7 coverage. Mr. Melcoch asked if Cody was still on the force and Chief Portillo confirmed that he was. Mr. Blackstone stated that he had a break in at his facilities and because they were visible on the street, they were able to catch them. Mr. Melcoch asked that if he was him, Mayor of the City, if it would have happened. Mr. Blackstone stated yes, that the things stolen didn't have to deal with him and they belonged to other people. Chief Portillo stated that he thought Mr. Melcoch misunderstood earlier and that the city does receive revenue from the citations and that we can keep 30%. Mr. Melcoch stated that it was just an incentive to write more citations. Chief Portillo stated no, and that they only issue citations for 10-15 over the limit. Mr. Melcoch stated, no and that he has friends that*

*have received citations. Chief Portillo stated that not his officers and Mr. Melcoch said that he had a bunch of liars then. Chief Portillo stated that their response time is less than three minutes if citizens were to call the police department instead of the county.*

*Another citizen spoke up and thanked the police department for showing up the night before due to having unwanted people on her property.*

**20. Adjournment:**


*Ruthie Seward made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Keith Skender second the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7:56 P.M.*

The City Council of the City of Coffee City reserves the right to adjourn into Executive Session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any matters listed on the agenda, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, including, but not limited to, Section 551.071 (Deliberation about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Personnel Matters), 551.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices), 551.087 (Economic Development), 418.175-183 (Deliberations about Homeland Security Issues) and as authorized by the Texas Tax Cod, including, but not limited to, Section 321.3022 (Sales Tax Information).

**CERTIFICATION**

I CERTIFY THAT A COPY OF THE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2023, SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA BY THE COFFEE CITY, CITY COUNCIL WAS POSTED AT THE CITY HALL PUBLIC NOTICE BOARD AND THE CITY WEBSITE ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2023 BY 5:00 PM.

  
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**JEFF BLACKSTONE**  
**MAYOR**

  
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**MARY MCDONALD**  
**CITY SECRETARY**