



**Wednesday, November 18, 2020, Minutes**  
**11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**  
**VIRTUAL**

At 11:31 AM the thirty-first meeting of the LR CENT Committee was called to order by Peter McKinney O'Connor, co-chair. Committee Members present during the meeting were: Andrea Neal, June Matheny, Ken Gill, Stacy Tierney, Troy Laha, and Tim Daters.

Committee Members Not Present were: Dr. Sybil Jordan Hampton, Erma Peterson, Don Shellabarger, Steve Strickland, Musheerah Tharpe,

Also present were: Mayor's Chief of Staff Charles Blake; LR CENT liaison Scott Whiteley Carter, and other City Staff.

**Welcome:** Mr. O'Connor welcomed everyone at 11:33 am.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the February 2020 minutes and the August 2020 were approved.

**General Financial Report**

Sara Lenehan, the City's Chief Financial Officer, reviewed sales tax collection through August 2020 (based on the report to the City by the State of Arkansas through October 2020). After a 3.74% increase in January and a 6.89% increase in February, as would be expected, the revenue decreased during the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic. The year to date total shows 2020 to be down 0.54% as compared to 2019. However this is less of a decrease than anticipated when the pandemic began.

One of the reasons the decrease is less pertains to the collection of online sales tax, which started on July 1, 2019. Therefore, the year-to-date for the first six months of 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 compared a time period with the online tax collection against a period without it. Another reason for the decrease being not as severe is probably related to the stimulus checks as well as the growth in online shopping.

As Finance looks at the conclusion of the original 10 years of projects, all projects will be completed. Those unfinished projects will receive between 95 to 96 percent of their original allocation. But due to budget estimates and other cost savings, the projects will still be finished.

## **Community Programs**

Director Dana Dossett reviewed the Reentry opportunities from January to November of 2020. So far this year, 126 residents have been served by the Reentry program. Of those, 21 were female and 105 were male.

She reviewed the new process for Re-Entry applicants, which went into effect on November 2. It involves gathering interests and assistance area information on the intake form. Those who need assistance are referred to those programs. Clients hired within the City are scheduled for New Employee Training and have a 15 day follow-up session. Clients hired outside the City are contacted for a 30 day follow-up session. Those who have not been hired have a 45 day follow-up. As a part of that, staff checks to see if additional resources are needed such as training.

A Career Crash Course session was offered from November 16 to 20 in the evenings. It was held at the West Central Community Center in a socially distanced setting and online.

## **Fleet Services**

Donna Facen, Fleet Services Financial Manager, updated the Committee on Fleet Services projects. Since January 2020, Fleet has purchased \$287,956 for the Fire Department, including 2005 Pierce Aerial Platform Truck. Fleet has spent \$12,412 on equipment within its own department. There has been \$89,909, spent for the Police Department including one pickup and two motorcycles. Fleet has spent \$61,881, on vehicles for the Public Works Department. This totals \$452,158, by Fleet Services between January and November of 2020.

## **Police**

Chief Keith Humphrey updated the committee on plans for the new Police headquarters building. The parking lot behind the building was purchased for additional parking; currently waiting for the construction/landscaping drawings and pricing for this component to be completed. Once that has been completed, it will be presented to the Board of Directors for approval. The bid for construction management was awarded to Baldwin & Shell, with the bid for architectural services closing August 21, 2019. Baldwin & Shell is ready to state and have estimated an eight (8) to nine (9) month completion.

Recruit Class #97 began August 17, 2020. 13 members are expected to graduate on January 29, 2021. Class 98 will start on February 15, 2021.

## **Public Works**

Director Jon Honeywell presented the Public Works update. As of October 2020, the in-house Sidewalk Program crew has completed 237,138 square feet (approximately 47,427 linear feet)

of new sidewalks since July 2012. Sidewalk constructed by the contractor with Sidewalk Program funds totals 171,388 square feet (34,277 linear feet) since September 2015. A total of 408,526 square feet (81,705 linear feet) of sidewalk reconstruction. That is approximately 15.4 miles of sidewalks

Regarding the 2016 to 2018 Street Drainage Improvement Program, there were 38 street/drainage projects: all design work is completed, two projects are under construction and 36 are complete.

The 2019 to 2021 Street and Drainage Improvement Program is underway. \$56 million was allocated for Street, Drainage, and Resurfacing projects. All 68 Street & Drainage projects for the 2019 – 2021 program have been funded. Public Meetings to receive input from neighborhoods are complete and resurfacing work under construction in all Wards.

- 9 Projects are in design.
- 11 Projects are in the Right-of-Way Phase.
- 7 Projects are in the Bidding and Award Phase.
- 25 Projects are under construction.
- 16 Projects are complete.

The 2019 Street Resurfacing Program has completed asphalt resurfacing on 111,300 linear feet of City streets. The 2019 Street Resurfacing Program is 95% complete.

The 2020 Street Resurfacing Program has completed asphalt resurfacing on 6,710 linear feet of City streets. The 2020 Street Resurfacing Program is 10% complete.

The Geyer Springs railroad overpass will be dedicated in the coming weeks. The Committee will be invited to the event.

### **General Comments/Questions**

The question was asked about plans for renewal of the 3/8 cent tax set to expire at the end of December of 2021. Mr. Carter responded that City staff was examining options and would have more information at the next meeting.

Mr. Carter also mentioned that Committee member Steve Strickland, who was unable to be at the meeting, had submitted questions in advance. Staff was working on providing those answers. Those would be sent out to all Committee members in the next couple of weeks.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 pm.