



**Wednesday, May 12, 2021, Minutes**  
**11:30 AM – 1:00 PM**  
**VIRTUAL**

At 11:35 AM the thirty-second meeting of the LR CENT Committee was called to order by Dr. Sybil Jordan Hampton, co-chair. Committee Members present during the meeting were: Erma Peterson, Steve Strickland, Don Shellabarger, Troy Laha, Stacy Tierney, and Tim Daters.

Committee Members Not Present were: Peter McKinney O'Connor, June Matheny, Ken Gill, and Musheerah Tharpe.

Also present were: Mayor Frank Scott, Jr.; LR CENT liaison Scott Whiteley Carter, and other City Staff.

**Welcome:** Dr. Hampton welcomed everyone at 11:35 am.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes of the November 2020 were approved. Since there was no February 2021 meeting due to the snow storm, there are no minutes from that meeting.

**General Financial Report**

Sara Lenehan, the City's Chief Financial Officer, reviewed sales tax collection through April 30, 2021 (based on the report to the City by the State of Arkansas through February 2021). Year to date, the City is \$467,227 or 5.59% over 2020. These figures represent collections in January and February – so the 2020 numbers are pre-Covid.

The City ended 2020 with \$53,748,525, which was \$599,154 lower than in 2019, or a decrease of 1.10%. However, considering the impact of Covid, this decrease had been anticipated to have been much larger.

Finance continues to look 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 through April 2021. Due to COVID-19, City Hall has remained closed to the public, which has affected the intake numbers. It is hoped that the intake numbers will increase once City Hall has re-opened to the public. However even with City Hall closed, the Department has served 30 residents using virtual options.

The Department has started collecting more demographic data on the persons being served and breaking it out by months. They hope to use this to study trends and to see if there are certain times in the year when numbers are higher or lower.

## **Update from Mayor Frank Scott, Jr.**

Mayor Scott joined the meeting to thank the Committee for their work. He discussed his Rebuild the Rock proposal and stated that he anticipated the City Board will call an election in June that would take place in the autumn. The hope is that at the same time the LR CENT 3/8 cent portion rolls off the book, the new sales tax would take effect.

## **Information Technology**

Randy Foshee, I.T. Director, updated the Committee on departmental projects. LRIT is currently working with Dell/EMC to install additional storage for the City's Active-Active system. This system supports applications and end-user data for all City Departments. The total \$376,558.42 plus shipping, taxes, and fees was purchased with funds from both the 3/8 Cent Capital Expenditure and the LRIT Special Projects accounts.

## **Police**

Chief Keith Humphrey updated the committee on plans for the new Police headquarters building. Work that is in progress includes plumbing and the walls. It is hoped that it will be occupied in late autumn 2021.

The Chief noted that in March two Lieutenants had been promoted to Major, two Sergeants had been promoted to Lieutenant, and two Officers had been promoted in Sergeant. There is more diversity in the officer ranks and in those being promoted.

Recruit Class #97 began August 17, 2020; twelve (12) members graduated January 29, 2021. Recruit Class #98 Started orientation on February 15, 2021, with eleven (11) participants; expected graduation date is July 20, 2021. Recruiting and testing for Class 99 ended on April 17, 2021. There are currently 39 applicants in the background investigation process.

## **Public Works**

Director Jon Honeywell presented the Public Works update. As of January 2021, the in-house Sidewalk Program crew has completed 244,264 square feet (approximately 48,852 linear feet) of new sidewalks since July 2012. Sidewalk constructed by the contractor with Sidewalk Program funds totals 203,373 square feet (40,674 linear feet) since September 2015. Together that is a total of 447,637 square feet (89,527 linear feet) of sidewalk reconstruction. That is approximately 16.9 miles of sidewalks

Regarding the 2016 to 2018 Street and Drainage Improvement Program, there were 43 street/drainage projects: all design work is completed, one project is under construction and 42 are complete.

The 2019 to 2021 Street and Drainage Improvement Program is underway. \$56 million was allocated for Street, Drainage, and Resurfacing projects. All 74 Street & Drainage projects for the 2019 – 2021 program have been funded. Public Meetings to receive input from neighborhoods are complete and resurfacing work is under way in all Wards.

- 7 Projects are in design.
- 9 Projects are in the Right-of-Way Phase.
- 4 Projects are in the Bidding and Award Phase.
- 27 Projects are under construction.
- 5 Projects are substantially complete.
- 22 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 17,765 linear feet of City streets. The 2020 Street Resurfacing Program is 33% complete.

## **Zoo**

Director Susan Altrui provided updates. The Zoo celebrated the opening of the new Colobus/Serval habitat on April 16th, 2021. In addition, the Zoo's new The Trails project was completed. It provides new pathways and landscaping improvements. In addition, new signage has been installed throughout the Zoo.

The Zoo has completed installation of the majority of the new public address system hardware, including speakers, power sources, and Ethernet connections. The final set of equipment needed to go live is in production with vendor. Two classrooms are complete and the third is in progress. Plans are underway for the summer Zoofari camp season.

The Zoo has engaged an engineering firm to conduct a topographical assessment and provide recommendations for a Wetland/Watershed Restoration Project.

### **General Comments/Questions**

Mr. Carter noted that the next meeting would be August 12, 2021, at 11:30 a.m. As it gets closer to the meeting, it will be determined whether that will be in person, virtual, or blended.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:56 pm.