

**Regular Meeting of the City Council
City of Rockport
1472 Military Road, Rockport, Arkansas
Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024**

Call to Order

Council member Brenda Womble called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Womble led the Pledge of Allegiance

Invocation

Womble led the opening prayer

Roll call

Council members present: Darrell Hughes; Jimmy Shuffield; Brenda Womble

Other city personnel present: Police Chief Toby Morales; Shira Kelley

Approval of minutes

- Shuffield motion to accept minutes of Dec. 19, 2023, meeting
- Hughes second
- Voting yes: Shuffield, Hughes, Womble

Financial Report

No financial report (Joyce has been out sick), but Womble says IRS has been satisfied with payment efforts thus far. City is still working on back payments plus current amounts due, but threat to seize city property has been mitigated. No success in selling old equipment; Morales points out that most government entities have been finalizing 2024 budgets and there may be more luck next month. Womble says the city is still delaying other payments in order to catch up IRS withholdings.

Departmental Reports

Planning Commission: no meeting

Sewer Department: three pumps are down; need to order and replace parts. Damage is due to residents flushing inappropriate items (tampons, gloves and socks have all been found). Discussion of levying fine against user if damage is caused by abuse. Discussion of implementing reconnection fee plus after-hours fee if Damon has to come in after scheduled work hours to reconnect. Discussion of what the fee would be: Damon's hours rate at two-hour minimum? \$40 during work hours and \$75 after hours? No decision; Womble will research options. Damon will be out for a while on medical leave. Hughes will help as needed during his recovery. Womble recommends that Hughes contact Damon before Friday to check on details.

Police Department: see written report. Morales says two officers (R. Bledsoe and K. Bledsoe) are leaving to become railroad police in Chicago. He has hired Brian Douglas (HSCSO) for one position; Douglas will start Jan. 22. He has received several calls but is still taking applications for the other position. Thomason-Hanley homicide update: suspect has been released pending cause of death determination from Arkansas State Crime Lab.

Street Department: discussion of needing more streets treated during inclement weather; only intersections have been treated during the current ice. Hughes says city owns a sprayer tank for spraying weeds; using it for a pretreatment solution like AHTD uses would be helpful.

- Hughes motion to accept departmental reports
- Shuffield second
- Voting yes: Hughes, Shuffield, Womble

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Adjournment

- Hughes motion to adjourn
- Shuffield second
- Voting yes: Hughes, Shuffield, Womble

Adjourned, 6:28 p.m.

Attest: _____
Shira Kelley, Secretary

Approved: _____
Kevin Baker, Mayor