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CITY OF NEWPORT
REGULAR MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL
JULY 7, 2025

The City Council of the City of Newport, Arkansas met in regular session July 7, 2025 in the chambers of the Municipal Courtroom.

Mayor Ratliffe called the meeting to order. City Clerk/Treasurer Hembrey called the roll. Council members present were Michael Allen, Allen Edwards, Wendell Green, Regina Lake, and Andy May. City Attorney Pettie was present. Council Members Carol Falwell, Leroy Manko and Julie Moss were absent.

Following the invocation by Wendell Green, those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion by Edwards and second by Allen to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2025 Meeting carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by Allen, Edwards, Green, May and Mayor Ratliffe. Lake abstained due to being absent on June 2, 2025.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Mayor Ratliffe had the following reports:

- A copy of the 2024 Sewer Department Audit Report was given to each Council Member. The report stated “In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the modified cash basis financial position of the City of Newport, Arkansas Sewer Department as of December 31, 2024 and 2023, and the respective changes in modified cash basis financial position and modified cash basis cash flows for the years then ended, in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting as described in Note 1(B) to the financial statements.” No action was required by the Council.
- An electronic copy of the May 2025 Financial Statements for the General Fund, Street Fund, 911 Fund, Sewer Fund, Administration of Justice Fund, Grant Fund, Intoximeter Fund, District Court Cost Fund, Court Automation Fund, Drug Control Fund, Advertising & Promotion Fund, Fed Aid Grant Fund, Judge/Clerk Retirement Fund, NEDC Fund and Newport Airport was sent to each Council Member with their council package. Mayor Ratliffe asked that if any Council Member had any questions to please direct their questions to City Clerk/Treasurer Hembrey.
- City Sales Tax received in June was \$178,491, County Sales Tax was \$119,116 and NEDC Sales Tax was \$89,246.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

VICKI WRAY TO ADDRESS COUNCIL ABOUT COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA)

Mayor Ratliffe recognized Ms. Vicki Wray, Jackson County CASA Coordinator. Ms. Wray gave an informative overview of the responsibilities of a volunteer Court Appointed Special

Advocate (CASA). Ms Wray appealed to everyone present to consider becoming a volunteer.

REAPPOINTMENTS TO NEWPORT PLANNING COMMISSION

- CHARLIE STEEL (TERM EXP. JULY 2028)
- RICHARD CARRAWAY (TERM EXP. JULY 2028)
- JESSE DAVIS (TERM EXP. JULY 2028)

After discussion, a motion by Allen and second by Lake to reappoint Charlie Steel to the Newport Planning Commission with a term expiring July, 2028 carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by Allen, Edwards, May, Lake and Green.

A motion by Lake and second by Allen to reappoint Richard Carraway to the Newport Planning Commission with a term expiring July, 2028 carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by Lake, Green, May, Edwards and Allen.

A motion by Lake and second by Green to reappoint Jesse Davis to the Newport Planning Commission with a term expiring July, 2028 carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by Green, May, Edwards, Lake and Allen.

APPOINT TOM MURRAY TO NEWPORT ADVERTISING & PROMOTION COMMISSION TO FULFILL UNEXPIRED TERM OF KIM WATKINS (TERM. EXP. MARCH 2026)

Mayor Ratliffe stated Kim Watkins had changed jobs and a replacement for her position was needed. Mayor Ratliffe stated he had spoken to Mr. Tom Murray from Downtown Motel dba Lakeside Inn and he has agreed to serve on the Newport Advertising & Promotion Commission. After discussion, a motion by Allen and second by Lake to appoint Mr. Tom Murray to the Advertising and Promotion Commission with a term expiring March, 2026 carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by May, Edwards, Green, Allen and Lake.

ORDINANCE: PERMITTING CITY TO CONDUCT BUSINESS WITH RICKEY HEMBREY

City Attorney Pettie read the Ordinance in its entirety. A motion by Allen and second by Lake to suspend the rules in their entirety and forego the second and third readings carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by Green, Edwards, May, Lake, and Allen.

A motion by Allen and second by Edwards to approve the Ordinance carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by May, Green, Allen, Edwards and Lake.

ORDINANCE: AMENDING PERSONNEL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR CITY EMPLOYEES REGARDING POLICE, FIRE AND NON-UNIFORM EMPLOYEE VACATION AND SICK TIME POLICIES; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Mayor Ratliffe stated the Ordinance was still being processed and would be presented at a later time.

97 **RESOLUTION: AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF NEWPORT, ARKANSAS, TO**
98 **LEASE PROPERTY TO VERIZON**

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100 City Attorney Pettie read the Resolution in its entirety. After discussion, a motion by Allen
101 and second by Edwards to approve the Resolution carried (5/0) with “yes” votes by Allen,
102 May, Edwards, Green and Lake.

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104 With no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

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106 PASSED AND APPROVED THE 4TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2025

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110 _____
MAYOR

111 ATTEST:

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113 _____
114 CITY CLERK