

CITY OF WALKER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 14, 2022

6:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Walker Mayor and City Council was held at the Walker City Hall on Monday, November 14, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jimmy Watson, followed with prayer led by Council member, Richard Wales. Municipal Clerk, Tammy Payton called the roll of the council after the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

The council members present were: David Clark, Eric Cook, Gary Griffin, Scarlett Major and Richard Wales.

Following opening comments, Mayor Watson called for a motion to adopt the council minutes for the October 11, 2022 meeting and the October 19, 2022 special meeting.

It was motioned by Mr. Wales, seconded by Mr. Cook, to accept the October 11th and October 19th, 2022 minutes.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Financial Director, Mike Cotton, presented before the Mayor and members of the council the September 2022 finance report. Mr. Cotton reported net assets at \$1,276,098. Gas sales were down by 26.8% year over year; sales tax decrease by 0.4%. He reported that the October 2022 financial report will be ready in approximately a week.

Mr. Clark introduced Budget Amendment No. 5 for the year ending 2022.

Mr. Cook introduced the Budget Amendment for the year 2023.

Chief of Operations, Jamie Etheridge, presented before the council a resolution to adopt changes to the employee handbook to update changes to its funeral leave policy. This will allow full-time employees time off for their spouse’s immediate family members.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Wales, the resolution to update the funeral leave policy was approved.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

The resolution proposing to officially name the road alongside the pond in Sidney Hutchinson Park and the road on Ball Park Road and East Railroad Avenue was presented before the council by Mr. Etheridge. The official naming of the roads would be added to the parish overlay program for asphaltting.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Major and seconded by Mr. Clark, the resolution was approved to name the road in Sidney Hutchinson Park ***Squirrel Crossing***. The road at Ball Park Road and East Railroad Avenue was approved to be name ***Pecan Lane***.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Mr. Etheridge presented before the council a resolution authorizing LGAP 22-23 Generator that will allow access to grants for projects available through the Louisiana Government Assistance Program operated by the Office of Community Development.

Upon motioned made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Mr. Wales, the LGAP 22-23 Generator was approved as presented.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

It was motioned by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Griffin, to enter into public hearing.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

Mr. Wales presented **Ordinance #11-2022-01**, pending approval, 2022 Annual Budget Amendment No. 3 that will approve increasing the general fund street department expenditures \$570,000 to purchase tractors and other equipment for the fiscal year of 2022.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Griffin and seconded by Mr. Wales, the 2022 Annual Budget Amendment No. 3 was approved.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

Mr. Griffin presented, **Ordinance #11-2022-02**, pending approval, 2022 Annual Budget Amendment No. 4, to increase the general fund for Parks and Recreation Department expenditures \$240,000 to purchase lights at the ball fields. The expenditures to be paid through a grant of \$240,000 from Louisiana Senate appreciations.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Mr. Cook, the 2022 Annual Budget Amendment No. 4 was approved.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

Mr. Clark presented, **Ordinance #11-2022-03**, pending approval, to adopt Title 14/Criminal Code [Section 14:1. State criminal laws adopted].

Upon a motion made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Mr. Wales, the Ordinance to Adopt Title 14/Criminal Code was approved.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

Ms. Major presented, **Ordinance #11-2022-04**, pending approval, proposing to Suspend Section 19-16E/Consumer Price Index (CPI) in regard to Natural Gas for the purpose of easing the economic impact on customers during the coldest months of the years. This would be for a period of six (6) months from the effective date.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Griffin, seconded by Mr. Cook, the Ordinance Suspending Section 19-16E/Consumer Price Index (CPI) in regard to Natural Gas Rates was approved.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

It was motioned Mr. Griffin and seconded by Mr. Wales to close the public hearing.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

A motion was made by Ms. Major and seconded by Mr. Wales, to lift the agenda for the recommendation of a new full-time hire with the Walker Police Department.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

Assistant Chief, Kenath Black, recommended for the council’s consideration candidate, Seth Dillon, as a full-time rehired at the Walker Police Department.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Wales, seconded by Mr. Cook, Seth Dillon was approved by the council as recommended.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

Additional Comments:

- ◆ Wendy Montalbano, Water Service Director, presented at the meeting an overview of the water grading process. She explained that there are seven (7) grading criteria. She feels that Walker is in good standing considering that there are some things we have no control. There are no current violations. The city can earn bonus points through management training to offset potential loss of points under customer satisfaction. She requested that the mayor and members of the council agree to a four-hour training which would have a positive impact. She will contact each of them to provide additional information about the training.
- ◆ Michael D. Scott who lives at 13658 Travis St. addressed the council as a concerned resident who lives on Travis St. He spoke of the recent shooting incident by his home which left his granddaughter traumatized. He wishes to know what role he can play that can help keep his neighborhood safe. As a former Entergy worker, he addressed issues regarding improved lighting in the vicinity and who to contact.
- ◆ Laura Felder addressed the council regarding the excessive trash and debris that is not being picked up. Jamie Etheridge explained to her the proper procedure to report and request garbage and debris pickup in Walker through the Street Department.

- ◆ Anthony Miller, who lives at 10050 Florida Blvd, re-addressed the council concerning an ongoing matter with damage to his water meter that has subsequently resulted in a high water bill. Wendy Montalbano and Jamie Etheridge acknowledged that they've spoken with Mr. Miller about the issues Mr. Miller have has brought to their attention. Ms. Montalbano committed to continue to work with Mr. Miller regarding this matter to reach a amiable resolution.
- ◆ Mayor Watson commented on the Veteran's Day activities on Saturday, November 12, 2022. The Knights of Columbus fed the veterans at the Community Center. Walker Baptist Church provided the tables/chairs for the event.
- ◆ Mayor Watson invited the public to attend our Annual Christmas Parade with activities following at Sidney Hutchinson Park on December 3, 2022 starting at 11:00 a.m.

It was motioned by Mr. Wales, seconded by Mr. Cook to adjourn the November 2022 city council meeting.

YEAS:	Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	None

Attest:


Tammy Payton – Municipal Clerk


Jimmy Watson, Mayor