

CITY OF WALKER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

September 12, 2022

6:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Walker Mayor and City Council was held at the Walker City Hall on Monday, September 12, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Jimmy Watson. Councilman Eric Cook led the meeting in prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Municipal Clerk Tammy Payton called the roll call.

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

It was motioned by Mr. Clark, seconded by Mr. Wales, to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2022 meeting.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major and Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Mayor Watson recognized Walker resident, Ms. Ralyn Johnson, for her ambition and determination competing on the show, "So You Think You Can Dance." This Walker High School graduate contended on this popular television series, making it to the final six contestants. Mayor Watson presented Ralyn with a plaque of achievement on behalf of the citizens of Walker and a key to the city.

Finance Director, Mike Cotton, presented the July 2022 financial report before the city council. Net change in net assets were \$1,573,621 (before transfer). Gas sales revenue decreased 8% and sales tax revenue decreased by 4%.

Chief of Operations, Jamie Etheridge, introduced the new purchasing agent for the City of Walker, Timothy Daigle.

Mr. Etheridge presented before the council a resolution authorizing changes to the First Guaranty Bank Visa card for the Purchasing Department. Deirdre Ockman's name has been removed. The request for a new credit card will not bear anyone's name. It will be issued as ***City of Walker – Purchasing***. The credit limit shall remain at \$10,000.

It was upon motioned made by Mr. Cook, seconded by Ms. Major, to approve these changes as recommended.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Mr. Etheridge presented before the council a resolution to adopt changes to the City of Walker Municipal Handbook to implement and update the smoking policy in all city owned buildings, vehicles, equipment and property that shall include vaping as part of its Smoke-Free Work Place Policy.

It was thereby upon a motion made by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to approve the update to the Municipal Handbook as presented.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Ms. Major introduced a proposed ordinance before the City Council that will allow the City of Walker to exchange one acre of land for the building of a cell tower on Highway 449 that will provide broadband internet access for the residents of Walker and surrounding areas. This matter will be an agenda item for the October 10, 2022 council meeting.

There were three (3) proclamations presented at the council meeting that set forth Mayor Watson’s support. The ***National Rail Safety Proclamation*** endorsed by Mayor Watson and read by Tammy Payton, acknowledges the importance of rail safety at railroad crossings. September 19 – 25, 2022 is designated as **National Rail Safety Week**. The purpose is to create public awareness of the dangers at railroad crossings for vehicles and pedestrians which can result in injuries and deaths.

State Representative Buddy Mincey, Jr. addressed the Walker City Council advocating his support of our United States military. He acknowledged the bravery, courage and sacrifice made by the members of our military. He expressed his full support through legislation and programs for members of the military, veterans and their families. This proclamation initiative is one that has resulted in six municipalities declared a “Purple Heart City.” Therefore, the City of Walker, as of September 12th, 2022, shall become the seventh in the Parish of Livingston. In honor of the occasion, Representative Mincey introduced Gunnery Sergeant Andre Sylvester of the Walker ROTC program. Gunnery Sylvester recognized the ROTC cadets present from Walker High School and Denham Springs High School. Cadet Isabell Bernstein read the Official Proclamation for the City of Walker, Louisiana with Mayor Watson officially declaring Walker a ***“Purple Heart City.”***

Assistant Chief of Police, Kenath Black, proposed to the council the recommendation to promote Dispatcher Ashley Graves to the position of Police Communications Supervisor.

A motion was made by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to approve Ashley Graves as the new supervisor of communications.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Assistant Chief Black presented a recommendation to the council recommending the hiring of Jennifer Nettles as dispatcher for the City of Walker.

A motion was made by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Clark, to approve the hiring of Ms. Nettles as dispatcher.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

Assistant Chief Black presented before the council two candidates as full-time police officers at the Walker Police Department. He introduced the first candidate, Victor Bayonne. Mr. Bayonne is a five-year POST certified police officer who has gone through the application processing, having passed the psychological evaluation and polygraph testing.

A motion was made by Ms. Major, seconded by Mr. Wales, to accept as recommended and approve the hiring of Officer Victor Bayonne.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

The next candidate presented before the council was Amber Fairburn. Ms. Fairburn has eight years of law enforcement experience and is POST certified. She has successfully completed the application process as well as has passed the psychological evaluation and polygraph testing.

A motion was made by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Clark, to accept as recommended and approve the hiring of Officer Fairburn.

YEAS: Clark, Cook, Griffin, Major, Wales

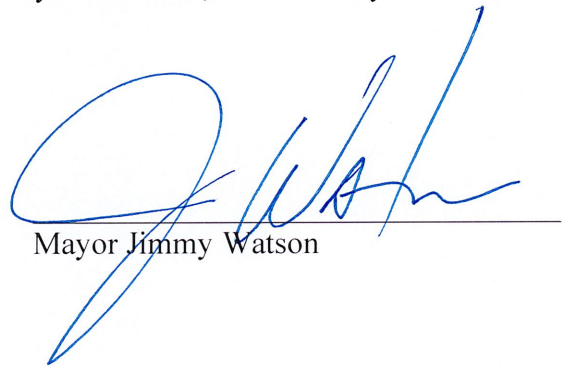
NAYS: None

ABSENT: None


Additional Comments:

- ◆ Mayor Watson announced the upcoming Fall Fest which will be held from September 29th – October 2nd, 2022. The public is invited to attend.
- ◆ The Veterans Day Parade will be on Saturday, November 12, 2022. There will be a breakfast for veterans following the parade served at our Community Center.

With no further business to discuss, it was motioned by Mr. Wales, seconded by Mr. Cook to adjourn.



Mayor Jimmy Watson

Attest: 
Tammy Payton – Municipal Clerk

