

**CITY OF TRAVELERS REST  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
August 19, 2021 6:00 P.M.**

The following members were present: Brandy Amidon, Mayor, Harvey Choplin, Mayor Pro Tempore, Grant Bumgarner, Rick Floyd, Kelly Byers, Brantly Vest, Shaniece Criss, and Sara Gilstrap. Also, present were: Eric Vinson, City Administrator, Lori Sondov, City Clerk, Phillip Tate, PW Director, Ben Ford, Police Chief, Greg Robertson, Fire Chief, and Brennan Williams, Planning Director. The media were notified. There were seven members of the public who attended. Absent: Jeff George.

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

1. Mayor Amidon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. Council and staff recited the Pledge of Allegiance

**B. INVOCATION**

1. The invocation was given by Councilmember Criss

**C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

1. Councilmember Bumgarner made a motion to approve the minutes for the Regular Council Meeting held on July 15, 2021. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Floyd and carried unanimously.

**D. PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**E. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (5-minute max)**

1. Matt Gilstrap, 9 Lipscomb Street, spoke on public safety with regards to several issues, including crosswalks and the Swamp Rabbit Trail. Mr. Gilstrap presented a list of petitions, which can be found attached to these minutes.

**F. ORDINANCE FOR SECOND READING**

1. Councilmember Criss made the motion to consider Ordinance O-19-21 to rezone approximately 2.15 acres of real property located at 208 North Poinsett Highway and listed as Tax Map Number 0497000500300) (TR 21-10) from S-1, Services District, to R-M Residential, Multifamily District. This rezoning was recommended by the Planning Commission and Staff. Councilmember Bumgarner made the second.

Graham Mullikin addressed Council on behalf of the developer and stated there are no firm development plans for the property at this time. Mr. Mullikin stated the developer wants to work with the City to create a good site plan.

Planning Director Williams confirmed there are no tenants on the property being rezoned. Councilmembers discussed their concerns over potential development on the property without passing the rezoning. Councilmember Choplin referred to a letter from the property owner to offer reassurance of a longer timeline if the mobile home residents living on the adjacent property were displaced and stated he is still concerned about gentrification. Mayor Amidon expressed appreciation for the transparency of the developer and asked for Mr. Mullikin to share Council's interest in affordable housing to with the owner.

The motion passed 7-1 with Councilmember Choplin opposed.

## **G. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Chair Byers provided the summary for the Public Works committee meeting.

Chair Floyd provided the summary for the Public Safety Committee meeting. Police Chief Ford and Fire Chief Robertson provided updates to the committee.

Chair Bumgarner provided the summary for the Ways and Means Committee meeting.

Chair Vest provided the summary for the Planning and Development report with additional information provided by Director Williams.

## **H. ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS FOR FIRST READING**

None

## **I. OLD BUSINESS**

None

## **J. NEW BUSINESS**

None

## **K. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

Administrator Vinson commented on the following items:

1. A new City Administrative Assistant, Sarah Edick, has been hired.
2. Movement is being made on the Roe Road intersection project (the future Pinestone Development) and the City is hoping to obtain additional paving on Roe Center Court.

3. An application is being presented to the C-Fund Committee to ask for half of the \$4.2 million Poinsett Project.
4. An air conditioning unit went out in the Old City Hall and Public Works Director Tate had it replaced.
5. The City has received the picnic tables it purchased through a grant. The Public Works team will be installing these in several areas throughout the City, including Trailblazer Park and near the History Museum.
6. A free mini-library will be installed in the upcoming week in Trailblazer Park.

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

1. There being no other business to come before the Council, Councilmember Bumgarner made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Floyd and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Brandy Amidon

Brandy Amidon, Mayor

Completed by

Lori Sondov

Lori Sondov, CMC, City Clerk and Treasurer

Eric Vinson

Eric Vinson, City Administrator

Good evening and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

First, I would like to state that I have much respect for our police officers and first responders and consider some my friends.

I have a few petitions and little time so I ask that you actively listen with no interruptions. Also, I do understand that some items may require the city, county, and state to work together.

TR is only going to grow. When moving to the upstate, the place people want to live is TR.

With that, I believe that public safety should be a top priority. Specifically with regard to the swamp rabbit trail and pedestrian traffic amongst city streets.

First, I would like to see speed strips or rumble strips when coming off of highway 276 on to main st where the speed limit goes from 50 to 35 to 25 within a 1/4 mile. This will heighten motorist's awareness of the reduced speed zone when coming into a heavily foot-trafficked area.

2nd, I would like to see ground lights on non-traffic light crosswalks. These should light up the road bright yellow when the button is pressed on the crosswalk post. This will alert motorists that someone is about to cross the road. I would also like to see the rectangular crosswalk signs that are about 4' high in the middle of the crosswalk. I am a member of Anytime Fitness, and when I want to jog the Swamp Rabbit Trail before working out, I use the crosswalk; however, I have to play frogger to get across the road.

3rd, I would like to see more patrol enforcing pedestrian crosswalk motorist's violations. This should be doable in September when the trash fee, that was rammed through without much citizen support, is implemented to allow for one more officer to patrol the city streets. While on this topic, once council member asked, "When is a good time to raise fees and taxes?" I would like to respond by saying there really isn't a good time; however, there definitely is a bad time. Like on the outside of a pandemic, when people have lost their jobs and livelihood, when inflation is at an all-time high, when property taxes are up, when hundreds of families will be moving into the Pinestone development, need I go on? I would like to recognize one council member that recognized the societal crisis going on and simply stated, "The fee might need to happen, but now is not the time." Anyways, I am not encouraging officers to go on a ticketing spree, but rather to hand out warnings and to educate motorists on pedestrian right of ways.

4th, there needs to be a non-light crosswalk on N Poinsett in close proximity to Chicora Alley. This is one of the more popular restaurants within the city and people usually have to park across the street in the gravel lot. I understand that there will be a crosswalk in Spring of 2022 at the new stop light at the intersection of Tubbs. Mtn and N Poinsett. However, I consider it foolish thinking to assume that people are going to walk 200 yards to the intersection, cross the street, and then another 200 yards back to the restaurant. A non-traffic light crosswalk needs to be here and it cannot wait until Spring of 2022.

6th, as TR main st branches down Poinsett and center st, the speed limit should not be 35, but rather keeping with the same speed limit as main st, which is 25.

7th, I'd like to see more focus on encouraging cyclists to obey traffic laws. This is for the cyclists' safety as well as the driver's safety. We have seen a few incidents recently in Greenville County where motorists and cyclists collided, and the last thing we want to happen is someone get injured or killed.

I believe that if these items are implemented, TR will be a much safer place.

Thank you