

City of Crossville

392 North Main Street
Crossville, Tennessee 38555



Minutes

Thursday, April 27, 2023

4:00 PM

Council Chambers

Call for Special Meeting

Mayor R.J. Crawford
Mayor Pro Tem Rob Harrison
Council Member Art Gernt
Council Member Scot Shanks
Council Member Mike Turner
City Manager Greg Wood
City Clerk Valerie Hale

Call to Order

The Crossville City Council met for a special called meeting on April 27, 2023 in Council Chambers. Mayor R.J. Crawford was present and presiding. He called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Present 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, and Mayor R.J. Crawford

Others present were Greg Wood, Valerie Hale, Baylee Rhea, Randy York, Tom Looney, William Cauphen, Bryan Srock, Roger Baker, David Otto, Chris Robinson, Colleen Lynch, Cindy Brown, Ella Turner, Butch Smith, John Partyrt, Caison Myers, Clifford Pugh, Clifford Waldo, Donna Davis, Carmen Wyatt, Tad Proffitt, Dale Braun, Jessie Brooks, Dustin Lester, Jesse Kerley, Jerry Kerley, Sandra Moore, John Isham, Heather Mullinix, John Selby, Terry Potter, Chris South, Josh Wyatt, Wayne Shadden, Ed Rose, Rusty Mellette, William Strong, Tracey Barnes, Betty Woods, Tim Wilson, Haley Dillard Music, Larry Woods, Selena Fisher, Charles Dixon, Glenn Clark, J.H. Graham, Michael Brady, Barbara Garrison, Stacie Reed, Khrista Wyatt, Tyler Clark, Steve Hill, Doug Brady, T.C. Miller, Roger Parsons, Rodney Brown, Fred Stout, Tom Pelfrey, John Qualmann, Robin Tollett, Gary and Marlena Bilyeu, Mark Fox, Steven Smith, Tom Tollett, Tom Isham, Sue Isham, Carol Mullinax, Stan Mullinax, Marilyn Affinito, Joyce Hardman, Darrell Hardman, Eleanor McSherry, Joe McSherry, Shirley Brent, Sue York, Bruce Wyatt, Sherry Cardwell, Melinda Kelsey, James Morrow, Thomas Littleton, Rick Myers, Hollis Mann, Mark S. Franklin, C. David Wilkerson, Mitzie Wilkerson, Mary Corson, Vernon Dixon, Dirk Davidson, Russell Smith, Brandon Robbins, Mary Lou Wibel, Jimmy Spriggs, Danny Wyatt, Mikki Kavich, Mickey Eldridge, Kevin and Caitlyn Chamberlin, Kevin Music, Larry Kidwell, Trey Kerley, Danny Thurman, Fred Houston, Billy Poore, Lee Lawson, and Tim Begley.

Other Business

k. Discussion and action regarding bond issuance for Indoor Recreation Facility

Mayor Crawford moved item K to the first item on the agenda. He noted the number of concerned citizens attending the meeting and wanted to address the item immediately. At the April 11, 2023 work session, City Council considered action for a bond. There is a State requirement when seeking out a bond to advertise in the local paper for issuance of bonds. Mayor Crawford assured the crowd that no final decisions have been made. At the April 4, 2023 Council meeting, Council voted to approve an amount not to exceed \$55 million in bonds, if the City Council chooses to go this route. Mayor Crawford again assured the crowd no decision has been made on any of the issues. Mayor Crawford stated many people have read inaccurate information and he wants to go about this in a responsible and transparent manner. Mayor Crawford then made the motion to rescind the vote and action from the April 4 meeting, item 6D. He wants Council to gather more information. This would render item 6D to move forward with the bonds null and void. Mayor Crawford opened the floor to Council to discuss.

Council member Turner started the discussion by saying it's not right to put anything like this on tax payers without a referendum vote. He said several constituents talked to him and told him they have fallen on hard times.

Council member Shanks followed by stating that he supports Mayor Crawford's motion. Shanks stated they have been working on this for some time because children are our future. He believes we should make an investment in Crossville and this will help revitalize downtown. He also brought up that he wants more businesses to come here and help keep employees here. This could help increase property values, citizen's quality of life, and bring families together. Council member Shanks stated there is a lot of misinformation about the recreation center such as property taxes quadrupling to pay for it. He then explained the research that he did on city and county property taxes. Worst case scenario, property taxes double. If doubled, of all counties in the state of Tennessee, Cumberland County would still be the lowest. He then followed by stating he doesn't want to raise taxes and that we needed to do a better job of getting information out.

Council member Turner responded to Council member Shanks by saying that we all think about our children but we also need to think about senior citizens and others on fixed incomes. He referenced Fred Houston telling them that property tax has to go up to cover this. He wants a referendum vote and he will be satisfied.

Mayor Pro Tem Harrison followed by stating that the advertisement in the paper is an authorization required by the State if even thinking about issuing bonds. He would like to gather more facts and hold public hearings. He mentioned there are multiple options and costs and that Council is looking at all possibilities. He is glad people are aware, but did not intend for misinformation to be spread.

Mayor Crawford stated that several good points were made. Council needs a better answer on cost and how we pay for it. There is a lot of confusion on the unknown factor and people need more of a voice. If property tax is involved, they may need a full referendum vote.

Mayor Crawford asked Council members if anyone had an objection in allowing for Public Comment at this special called meeting. Council members all agreed.

A motion was made by Mayor R.J. Crawford, seconded by Council Member Art Gernt, to rescind its vote and action on April 14, 2023, item 6D regarding the approval to move forward with the bond resolution and the notice in the Crossville Chronicle be considered null and void. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

Public comments

Mayor Crawford started the Public Comments by asking Dale Braun to come up. Dale Braun stated he is a Pastor and business owner here in town and loves kids too. His main issue he has with the recreation center is the direct government competition with private business. He does not think Council should use public monies to compete with the private gymnasiums and work out facilities. He is strongly against it. He stated that our economy is in an economic downturn and he deals with a lot of homeless and poor people. This wouldn't necessarily affect them in paying taxes but he does agree with Council member Turner that people have fallen on hard times and they are struggling

to get by. He stated low property taxes are a good thing and the reason people move here. There are plenty of public pools and they are not overflowing with people. Bruce Wyatt was called on next but said he was happy with the motion to rescind the vote and did not need to discuss anything further.

Butch Smith was then called on. He thanked Council for allowing public comment. He has two questions; one being regarding the notice in the Chronicle last Monday. It stated that if a petition is not brought forward within 20 days, that the notice would go in to affect then Council would have the authority to issue those bonds at another meeting. Mayor Crawford responded that it would still need to be voted on. Mr. Smith said that if no one had shown up and objected to this notice, Council could have issued the bonds with a majority vote. Mayor Crawford stated that is correct. Mr. Smith followed by stating he personally called Fred Houston, the City's Finance Director, and Fred told him that for certain the property tax rate would go up 100% and could possibly go up 200%. He wants everyone to know the truth of it. Mayor Crawford responded that he is sure that would only be if they decided to do the full \$55 million and no one is wanting or seeking to do that. There is a process and there would be opportunities, like today, for citizens to come forward to make changes.

Chris Robinson was next to speak. He asked Council if the recreation center had a green light to proceed to which they responded no. Mr. Robinson responded with letting Council know he does not feel like Crossville needs a recreation center. He agrees with Council member Turner and he is glad he is on Council. As far as children are concerned, parenting begins at home and parents need to take responsibility for their children. He admires Council's sense of duty to do something for kids but still does not think Crossville needs a recreation center.

Tom Isham started by stating that he has lived in the city all of his life with the exception of the 3 years he was in the military. He stated he is a County Commissioner in the Second District and everyone he has talked to in the last two weeks is not really in support of this at all. His District has asked him to get up and say a few words and that they are against the recreation center. He hopes that sales tax could finance this but he doubts it. The city, county, and state all live off of sales tax. In 2008, he had friends building homes. Those contractors lost five houses plus the homes they lived in. A recession could and will happen. Once this happens, sales tax will decline and he wants to know how they will make the payment for it. He thinks they need to be cautious on what they spend and how much they spend. Mr. Isham appreciates the Mayor and Council voting on this and thinks there needs to be a referendum for the people to decide.

Caitlin Chamberlin is a Crossville City resident and a mother to one and pregnant with her second. Caitlin stated that the proposed recreation center is so much more than fun. Amenities included in recreation centers, especially pools, offer extensive and long-lasting benefits, regardless of age or ability. Growing up, Caitlin had access to a center like this. There was easy and affordable access to things like swim lessons, summer day camp, and swam on a swim team for ten years. Community pools serve to fulfill a safe and fun recreational need. There are also therapeutic options. Access and ability to swimming is more than an extracurricular activity but a vital survival skill that is deprived of so many people in areas like Crossville. Many parents take their children to Cookeville for swim lessons. Without access to amenities, parents are sorely limited in the types of skills and passion that can be nurtured in to children. With the recent closing of the Rocky Top 10 movie theatre, the gap of safe and accessible options is only getting larger. Crossville has grown and continuing to grow with all the new business coming to the area. We need to take advantage of the opportunity to

invest in our community to attract and retain commerce to this area and our city. Expanding access to amenities expands both a current vital need in our community and positions Crossville to attract new residents and commerce. As a City resident and mother, she is asking Council to please choose to enrich our community and to envision the long term, lasting benefits that this can have on our City for decades to come.

Mayor Crawford asked if anyone else would like to address the Council at this time and encouraged citizens to let their voices be heard.

Tim Wilson spoke up. He stated he is the owner of The Gardens RV Community and represents 240 homes and over \$100 million in equity in the Gardens. One retired person represents three factory workers. His community generates a lot of sales tax. He does not ever get involved in City politics and does not want to be involved, but has a few comments. Mr. Wilson thinks an amenity like this is great and he would love to see it but he would love to see another way of paying for it. Mr. Wilson stated he attended the work session where Council discussed the recreation center and how to pay for it. Once Council started discussing raising property taxes, that was the torpedo that sunk it. He wants Council to work something out to have this amenity but would also like to see something done with the downtown renovation. Our city needs to show better to people who are coming here to retire. Mr. Wilson continued to say that he spends one third of his time going to other communities and large RV rallies to speak to try to get people to move to Crossville. Crossville is the number one retirement place in the country. One of the first things he shows possible future residents is the property tax rate. He would like to see the amenity but does not think it should be paid for out of property taxes.

Mary Corson grew up in a large city with all of the amenities but she grew up poor so she did not have access to all of the amenities. She stated there were lakes and city pools that she went to swim at and to learn to swim you dunked your head under the water. She continued with children here that do not know how to read and also do not know how to swim. She asked Council which was more important – reading or swimming? She thinks those that want it and will use it should pay for the recreation center and not those that do not want or need it.

Roger Baker stated that most people come to Crossville because they can afford to live here. He asked Council where locals are going to go once they cannot afford to live here. He thinks that if anyone needs to learn to swim, they can learn in Daddy's Creek like he did. He feels that parents will just drop their children off at the recreation facility while they go do something else.

a. Approval to award bid for Interchange Drive precast culvert

On April 18, 2023 one bid was received for a precast culvert from CR Barger & Sons in the amount of \$104,180.00. Staff recommends approval of the bid. A budget amendment is necessary.

A motion was made by Mayor R.J. Crawford, seconded by Council Member Scot Shanks, to award the bid to C.R. Barger & Sons. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

b. Approval to award bid for Interchange Drive precast culvert installation

On April 18, 2023, six bids were received for the installation of the precast culvert for Interchange Drive. Staff recommends awarding the bid to low bidder, Hamilton Consulting & Construction, in the amount of \$244,640.00. A budget amendment is necessary.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, seconded by Council Member Scot Shanks, to award the bid Hamilton Consulting & Construction. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

c. Ordinance amending FY22-23 budget-Interchange Drive culvert

A budget amendment is necessary for the Interchange Drive culvert project in the amount of \$350,000.00.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, seconded by Council Member Scot Shanks, to approve first reading of the ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

d. Approval to award bid for City Hall Roof Replacement

On April 18, 2023, three bids were received for City Hall's roof replacement. Porter Roofing bid in the amount of \$170,108.00. Genesis Roofing bid in the amount of \$182,500.00. Turner Roofing bid in the amount of \$194,000.00. Staff recommends awarding the bid to the low bidder Porter Roofing. A budget amendment is necessary.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, seconded by Council Member Scot Shanks, to award the bid to Porter Roofing. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

e. Ordinance amending FY22-23 budget-City Hall roof

A budget amendment is necessary for the upcoming roof replacement on City Hall.

A motion was made by Council Member Art Gernt, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, to approve first reading of the ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

f. Approval to award bid for Centennial Park Asphalt Paving, Sealing, and Striping

On April 18, 2023, three bids were received to pave, seal, and stripe Centennial Park. Rogers Group bid in the amount of \$136,165.00. Copeland DRP bid in the amount of \$119,234.00. R & R Paving bid in the amount of \$96,100.00. Staff recommends the low bidder, R & R Paving, be awarded the bid. A budget amendment in the amount of \$30,000.00 is necessary.

A motion was made by Council Member Scot Shanks, seconded by Council Member Art Gernt, to award the bid to R&R Paving. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

g. Ordinance amending FY22-23 budget-Centennial Park Paving & Striping

A budget amendment is necessary for the Centennial Park Paving & Striping project.

A motion was made by Council Member Scot Shanks, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, to approve first reading of the ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

h. Approval of contract with Verizon Wireless

Staff requests approval of the attached Verizon contract. The contract transitions the City to the same plan as the State of Tennessee and will give the City equipment free of charge. While the City gets service from state contract, they have a different plan for equipment.

A motion was made by Council Member Scot Shanks, seconded by Council Member Art Gernt, to approve the contract with Verizon Wireless. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

i. Ordinance amending FY22-23 budget-Palace Theatre Roof Replacement

A budget amendment is necessary for costs incurred related to the replacement of the Palace Theatre roof.

A motion was made by Council Member Scot Shanks, seconded by Council Member Mike Turner, to approve third reading of the ordinance. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

j. Ordinance amending FY22-23 Budget regarding Village Inn

City Attorney Randy York stated that this is the third and final reading. He informed Council the deeds have been prepared, along with survey and title opinions. Subject to approval, they plan to close on Monday, May 1, 2023. After closing, the City will obtain the deed. It has been confirmed that all occupants have moved out except the maintenance employee and he will be moved out by closing. Dr. Wood and Steve Threet were complimentary of the Crossville Police Department officers and employees for helping the Village Inn residents find homes and accommodations.

A motion was made by Council Member Art Gernt, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, to approve third reading of the ordinance. The motion carried by

the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Council Member Art Gernt, Council Member Scot Shanks, Council Member Mike Turner, Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison and Mayor R.J. Crawford

Adjournment

A motion was made by Council Member Scot Shanks, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Rob Harrison, to adjourn the meeting at 4:47 p.m. The motion carried with a unanimous vote.