

Bentonville City Council  
Meeting Minutes  
April 25, 2017

The City Council of Bentonville, Arkansas, met in regular session Tuesday, April 25, 2017, at 6:00 p.m., at the Community Development Building, 305 Southwest A Street, Bentonville, Arkansas.

Present were council members Stephanie Orman, Chad Goss, Tim Robinson, Chris Sooter, James Smith, Bill Burckart, Octavio Sanchez and Jim Webb. Also present were Mayor Bob McCaslin, City Attorney George Spence, City Clerk Linda Spence, the press, city staff and the audience.

At 6:00 p.m., prior to calling the meeting to order, Mayor McCaslin invited public comments pertaining to items on the agenda. There was no response so the Mayor declared the comment period closed. The Mayor then invited questions or comments from the Council about items on the agenda and there were none.

Thereafter, Mayor McCaslin called the meeting to order. The Mayor then led everyone present in the pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence in support of our armed forces.

Motion was made by Alderman Burckart to approve the minutes of April 11, 2017 as presented, second by Alderman Webb. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

Motion was made by Alderman Sooter to suspend the rules regarding the reading of all ordinances on three separate days and further that all ordinances and resolutions be read by title only, second by Alderman Burckart. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

Mayor McCaslin recognized Police Chief Jon Simpson. Chief Simpson introduced Adam Holland and he was sworn in by the Mayor as a reserve officer for Bentonville Police Department.

1a. Ordinance No. 2017-72: Ordinance accepting a lot split of Lot 18 Block 3 Braithwaite Addition to the City of Bentonville, Arkansas.

[Applicant: Jason McNabb;  
Location: 1802 Oakwood Avenue]

City Attorney Spence read the ordinance by title only. Motion to pass by Alderman Sanchez, second by Alderman Burckart. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

- 1b. Ordinance No. 2017-73: Ordinance accepting a property line adjustment of Lot 16 Block 1 Dunn & Davis Addition to the City of Bentonville, Arkansas.

[Applicant: Cadence Group, LLC;  
Location: 505 Southwest B Street]

City Attorney Spence read the ordinance by title only. Motion to pass by Alderman Sanchez, second by Alderman Webb. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

2. Resolution No. 4-25-17 A: Resolution authorizing the Mayor and City Clerk to enter into a land exchange agreement with R. Rev. Larry R. Benfield, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas to facilitate trail development.

City Attorney Spence read the resolution by title only. Motion to pass by Alderman Smith, second by Alderman Orman. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

3. Resolution No. 4-25-17 B: Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Clerk to enter into an agreement with Cox Communication for the joint use of poles within the City of Bentonville.

City Attorney Spence read the resolution by title only. Motion to pass by Alderman Sanchez, second by Alderman Robinson. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

4. Resolution No. 4-25-17 C: Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Clerk to purchase certain customers and facilities from Carroll Electric Cooperative Corporation.

City Attorney Spence read the resolution by title only. Motion to pass by Alderman Sanchez, second by

Alderman Burckart. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

5. Resolution No. 4-25-17 D: Resolution setting a public hearing on May 9, 2017, on a petition filed by Sean Reber requesting a utility easement vacation for 304 Northwest Tall Oaks, Oaklawn Hills Subdivision.

City Attorney Spence read the resolution by title only. Motion to pass by Alderman Sanchez, second by Alderman Orman. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

6. Resolution No. 4-25-17 E: Resolution declaring certain property belonging to the City of Bentonville, Arkansas, as surplus property. [three thermal imagers]

City Attorney Spence read the resolution by title only. Motion to pass by Alderman Burckart, second by Alderman Sanchez. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

7. Approval of a budget adjustment to allow for the addition of one full-time recreation specialist for the Parks and Recreation Department at the Bentonville Community Center.

Motion to approve by Alderman Sanchez, second by Alderman Robinson. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

8. Approval of a change order and budget adjustment for the Parks and Recreation Department to provide for the addition of lights in the extended tunnel along the Wishing Spring Trail.

Motion to approve by Alderman Sanchez, second by Alderman Smith. There was no discussion. Motion carried (8-0).

9. Ward restricting discussion and presentation by City Attorney George Spence.

Mr. Spence stated that the reason for this discussion was that Ward 3 contains almost 50 percent of the City's population.

He explained that the population numbers presented were based on a census bureau formula and did not reflect the actual population. He added that it would not be possible to determine current actual population figures without a special census, which would be costly. He stated that the estimate for future growth was based on actual data of pre-addresses issued by the City. Mr. Spence stated that the Arkansas statutes provide that the Council is to consider redistricting when it determines that the people can best be served by equalizing the population in the various wards.

As an aside, Mr. Spence noted that the language in the Arkansas Code had recently been changed from "alderman" to "council member".

Mr. Spence listed the choices the Council had to consider. First was whether to redistrict at all. Second was whether to keep four wards or increase the number of wards. Third would be where to set new boundary lines. Fourth would be whether to continue with election of all aldermen at large or change to election by ward. Fifth, and finally, whether to have one council member from each ward elected by ward and the other elected at large. He added that any changes would not be effective until after the next election.

Mr. Spence presented four proposed redistricting maps provided by Jim Wheelless from GIS Services. Mr. Spence indicated that there was no specific time that any changes needed to be made by but added that it was his opinion that earlier was better than later, but that the decision was up to Council.

Mr. Spence then invited questions and a lengthy discussion was had concerning the choices to be made by the Council.

Motion was made by Alderman Sanchez to redistrict.

Motion was made by Alderman Burckart to continue to elect aldermen at large and not by ward for all alderman positions, second by Alderman Robinson. Motion carried (8-0).

Motion was made by Alderman Robinson to redistrict, second by Alderman Sanchez. Motion carried (8-0).

Motion was made by Alderman Smith to not add wards, second by Alderman Webb. Motion carried (7-1), with Alderman Orman voting no.

Alderman Smith made a motion to adopt plan four.

After considerable discussion about how to reshape the ward boundary lines, Alderman Goss suggested that there not be a vote on the boundary maps tonight.

Mr. Spence indicated that he would have new maps prepared based on his perception of the desires of the Council. He encouraged members of the Council to contact him to express any additional thoughts about coming to a conclusion on the boundary lines.

Motion to adjourn by Alderman Smith, second by Alderman Webb. Motion carried (8-0).

Linda Spence  
Linda Spence, City Clerk

Bob McCaslin  
Bob McCaslin, Mayor

