

City of Sparta
Mayor & Council “Called Meeting”

August 18, 2022

4PM Thursday

Elected Officials present were Mayor Allen Haywood, Mayor ProTem Sandra Sherrod, Council Members, Brandon Nolley, Tom Roberts, and Rav Zuridan Yisrael at 4:10 PM.

City Clerk, Virginia Webb was present. Attorney John Hitchcock was not present.

This meeting was called to order by Mayor ProTem Sherrod, followed by a moment of silence, The Lord’s Prayer and The Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Haywood explained that this meeting is only to discuss the items on the agenda. After presenting the budget’s categorical line index chart, which is required to be published, he pointed out that the numbers for property taxes and personal vehicle have changed. Although the numbers had changed, due to the tax digest for the county decreasing by \$200,000 in the budget, the bottom line was not affected. There is only a change in category, but not revenue.

There will be no increase of taxes.

Councilman Yisrael spoke, on behalf of a community member, requesting the clarification of what the “administrative” aspect of the budget included. Mayor Haywood explained that the administrative aspect of the budget covers expenses such as repairs and supplies for City Hall and salaries for the different departments, including council, police department, and the street department. Councilman Yisrael also inquired about the ARPA funds. Mayor Haywood offered to show him a total amount and how much has been spent in 2022.

1. Adoption of the FY 2022 City Government Budget

Councilman Roberts made a motion to approve the budget. Councilman Nolley seconded. Discussion none. Vote unanimous.

2. Review & Discussion of the Trash Collection Fees for Residential & Commercial City Waste Collection Services

Ryland is a great service, although it costs roughly \$1.00 a can more, per month residential. As of July 2021, there haven’t been many complaints about collection issues. July 2022’s bill was about \$400 more than the regular bill, which includes all 512 residential cans, due to fuel surcharge.

The garbage collection rate has not been raised since 2005.

Due to the increase in the surcharge and garbage rates, Mayor Haywood suggested raising the trash collection fee from \$16.56 to \$18.50 per month; for those requesting a secondary can the fee will increase from \$12.15 to \$15.00 per month.

The commercial cans (4-yards, 6-yards, and 8-yards) fees have remained the same for years.

Mayor Haywood explained the cost that the city pays for each size trashcan and the amount that each customer is charged per dumping. For a 4-yard can the city is paying \$71.47 per dumping, while the customer is billed \$71.46 per dumping. A 6-yard can cost \$107.17 per dumping; the customer is billed as \$96.47 per dumping. An 8-yard can cost \$142.89 per dumping; the customer is billed \$115.28 per dumping.

Due to not raising rates when the city partnered with Ryland, Mayor Haywood states that the city is losing money on commercial accounts.

Mayor Haywood proposes to increase the charge of each commercial trash can by size. For a 4-yard trashcan will cost \$85.00 per dumping, 6-yard will be at minimum \$115.00 per dumping, and the 8-yard will be at minimum \$160.00 per dumping.

Councilman Yisrael suggested a 10% flat rate across the board.

Councilman Roberts asks for clarification if the flat rate increase is going towards the cost. Mayor Haywood said the increase is towards the cost.

There was a discussion to address a fuel surcharge to accommodate the additional charges.

In the August utilities' billing statement, the city will be extending to all water customers, who are interested, the opportunity of receiving trash collection services by providing their name, address, and phone number by visiting City Hall or via call or text.

Mayor Haywood encouraged the Council's input. Councilman Yisrael feels that residential services should remain the same and we should increase above cost for commercial services. Councilman Nolley agrees.

Councilman Robert states that the city is paying other salaries that are not figured into the cost per receptacle and should be added to it.

On further reflection, Councilman Yisrael thinks that a surcharge that fluctuates with surcharge from Ryland would be beneficial. Mayor Haywood thinks remaining at a flat rate is best for the residential fees, because the fluctuating surcharge may cause confusion to the patrons.

Councilman Yisrael suggests tabling the discussion on the residential trash collection fees to a later time. However, after discussion, Councilman Yisrael motioned to move the commercial rate 15% above the cost. Councilman Nolley seconded. Mayor ProTem voted "yes". Councilman Roberts voted against the motion, stating that the increase should be more than the proposed 15% to allow for street department cleanup expenses.

Adjournment

Mayor ProTem Sherrod to adjourn the meeting and Councilman Yisrael seconded.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:50 p.m.