



TOWN OF WASHINGTON
204 N. MAIN ST.
WASHINGTON, OK. 73093
MINUTES

Type: Regular Meeting

Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025

Place: Washington Town Hall

204 N. Main Street

Washington, OK. 73093

1. Call to Order Time: 6:20pm

2. Roll Call:

Mayor & Trustee Joel Siria: Here

Trustee Duane Branham: Here

Trustee Tony Brennan: Here

3. Pledge of Allegiance, Proclamations, & Presentations

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Mayor & Trustee Siria and Town Administrator Mica Lunt Presented a guiding principles award to both Public Works Director T.R. Leshner and Trustee Branham.

C. Public Comment (each speaker limited to three minutes)

Bob Burris, shared concern regarding the price of his utility bill and asked the Board to be considerate of the residents of Cedar Hills regarding Utilities.

Camdon Foster, shared his feelings regarding the utility bill increase. He stated that he would like Cedar Hills residents to benefit from the rate increase.

4. Consent Agenda (Items A-G)

A. Approve the Minutes from the Town of Washington Regular Meeting February 13, 2025.

B. Approve Expense Beyond Town Administrator Authority limits.

C. Approve a resolution authorizing a change in allocated funding originally authorized by resolution 24-8 for the SCADA/telemetry System.

D. Approve a resolution amending the FY24-25 budget, adding additional funding to the Public Works Authority Utility Expenses- Repairs & Maintenance category.



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E. Approve an ordinance increasing the court costs from \$15.00 to \$30.00 and providing for a collection fee of 35% of the amount of any unpaid fines or cost if contracting with a collection agency for the collection thereof.

F. Approve an ordinance establishing a "Utility Collection Fee" to provide for a collection fee of 35% of the amount of any unpaid fines or cost if contracting with a collection agency for the collection thereof.

G. Approve and authorize the Town Administrator to execute an agreement with Aberdeen Enterprizes & RS2 Solutions to collect delinquent utility and court related payments.

Motion to approve as written by Branham.

Second: Brennan

Votes:

Joel Siria: Aye

Duane Branham: Aye

Tony Brennan: Aye

5. Action Items

A. Consideration and possible approval, denial, postponement, or other action regarding an ordinance adopting an employee retirement system, defined contribution plan, and providing retirement benefits.

Motion to approve the ordinance as written with one change to the employee contribution of up to 6% with a Town match of 100% of the amount contributed by the employee and for the contribution limit to be reviewed annually. By Branham

Second: Brennan

Votes:

Joel Siria: Aye

Duane Branham: Aye

Tony Brennan: Aye

B. Consideration and possible approval, denial, postponement, or other action regarding a joint resolution of the Town of Washington, Oklahoma and of the Washington Public Works Authority extending the administrative freeze on all residential and commercial developments and zonings; allowing for preliminary plats upon the execution of a disclaimer; providing for the duration of said freeze; providing for circumstances to which the freeze will not apply.

Motion to approve as written by Branham.



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Second: Brennan

Votes:

Joel Siria: Aye

Duane Branham: Aye

Tony Brennan: Aye

- C. Consideration and possible approval, denial, postponement, or other action regarding an ordinance repealing Ordinance #2004-10.1 effectively establishing a three-member board.
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Trustee Branham stated that he knew some individuals were interest in running for a seat on the Board but that they did not currently meet the requirements.

Trustee Siria Asked what the legal standing was on if they repealed the ordinance now but, wanted to have a 5-man board in the future.

City Attorney Treadaway stated that it is not illegal to repeal the ordinance but, that if they wanted to have a 5-man board in the future they would have to repeat the whole process again.

Trustee Siria stated that he wanted a 5-man board. He did not, however, want those members to be appointed. He wanted them to be elected by the people but, we did not have enough election participation.

Trustee Branham stated that he wanted the 5-man board as well but, he will not be here as his term ends in April.

Trustee Brennan stated that he also wanted the 5-man board and thought we would have more people who wanted to get involved but that a 3-man board feels like the right choice for now.

Town Administrator Lunt wanted to remind the community that we are still looking for individuals to serve on the Board of Adjustments and the Planning and Zoning Committee.

Motion to approve as written by Brennan.

Second: Branham

Votes:

Joel Siria: Aye

Duane Branham: Aye

Tony Brennan: Aye



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- D. Consideration and possible approval, denial, postponement, or other action regarding a request to be heard by Jeff Holland.

Jeff Holland, stated the he didn't feel that the Town Hall was an appropriate place for employees to bring their pets and that it was inappropriate for those pets to be unleashed.

Trustee Siria assured Jeff Holland that the off-leash dogs' incident had been properly addressed. Citations have been issued and have since been paid for and that the dogs in question will be leashed outdoors.

Jeff Holland stated that he questioned the purchasing of gas for employee vehicles.

Trustee Siria stated that as he had Mr. Hollands request ahead of time, he was able to review the fuel purchases and that all purchases that had been made appeared to be in good standing with Town of Washington policy.

Jeff Holland also stated there needed to be better communication with the Washington Volunteer Fire Department regarding the issuing of burn permits.

No Action taken.

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- E. New Business (if any)

None.

6. Financial Reports

The regular monthly financial reports for all funds are provided to the Trustees for their review and information. (Presented by: Mica A. Lunt, Town Administrator).
This item is for informational purposes only.

7. Town Administrator, Staff, and Trustee Reports

Fire Department Report presented by Chief Billy Simpson

WVFD had 19 calls for the month of February 8 fire, 8 medical and 3 motor vehicles. He requested better communication from the Town Hall regarding burn permits and requests a review of the current fire ordinance. Chief Simpson also went over the WVFD procedure regarding tornadic weather conditions. During those times you may see fire trucks and fire department equipment out and about. This is to ensure that if severe weather is severe enough to affect the fire station that the apparatus is still accessible.

Trustee Siria asked Chief Simpson if the Fire Suppression issue in the Cedar Hills community had been resolved. Chief Simpson stated informed the Board, No. The issue still stands. At this point members of the Cedar Hills community that were present requested a notice be sent out that there are no fire hydrants within their community.



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Chief Simpson also wanted to remind the community that the WVFD are volunteers and are not paid.

Police & Code Enforcement Report presented by Chief Ruben Ruiz

Chief of Police, Ruben Ruiz gave a report on traffic and municipal code enforcement over the course of the month. Zone 2 code enforcement finished, and we will be moving on to Zone 3. During tornadic weather you will see that the police department will drive the neighborhood with sirens and warn the public to seek shelter. Chief Ruiz gave an update on new equipment regarding Tasers, Vests, Marked Police Units, and Cameras

Town Clerk's Report presented by Town Clerk Kasey Leshner

- Researched and compared debt collection companies.
- Met with Aberdeen Enterprises/RS2 Solution regarding debt collection.
- Continued training on Jayhawk Solus Utilities Software and began integrating the new system by entering customer data.
- Continued training on OMNIA software, identified and corrected installation errors, and our new radio meters continue to provide important feedback to our customers to find and address leaks that they may have been unaware of.
- Coordinated with the Fire Department and the accounting company to ensure 1099 forms were sent to volunteer firefighters. Began researching ways that I may be able to help secure funding for the Fire Department and by doing so strengthening the collaboration between our two entities.
- Attended continuing education sessions with the Oklahoma Municipal Court Clerk Association (OMCCA).

Administrators Report presented by Town Administrator Mica Lunt

Town Administrator Lunt wanted to address the statements from earlier in the meeting that there is no city ordinance that prohibits the burning of limbs and leaves. If this is something that the Board wants to consider we can do that but, the current ordinance only prohibits the burning of rubbish and trash. So that may be something we want to consider putting on the docket with Chief Simpsons' recommendations.

A. Budget Preparation

- a. At the previous meeting, the TOW Agreed Upon Procedures Report for FY 22-23 was provided to the Board from a third-party firm we have historically utilized to complete this report. Unfortunately, the pattern and practice of having only the state-law minimum requirement completed instead of an audit has made us ineligible for certain loan programs. We are currently researching other firms for a cost-effective full-fledged audit for FY 23-24.



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- b. Budget preparation season is underway. We started our first budget kickoff meeting earlier today and will have more in the coming months. What I can tell you is that the Town of Washington is in serious need of additional revenue in order to maintain our trajectory of improvement. In this current FY, we were able to leverage \$340,000 in ARPA grant funding. The ARPA program has stopped, so we are looking at attempting to make it through FY 25-26 starting at \$340,000 behind. One way we can help to close that back is by passing a \$0.01 sales tax increase. I think we've done a good job of communicating the myriad of improvements we've been making, but to quickly recap, we have repaired about 30 repairs of leaks in our water system, installed a new water main on Main Street, installed a telemetry system to monitor our wells, water tower, and lift station, we have rehabilitated two of our four wells resulting in 100% improved production from those wells, we remodeled Town Hall, we replaced the electrical box on our lift station, we've partnered with McClain County District #2 for roadway improvements with more on the way this spring, and we continue to aggressively apply for and leverage grant funding as it is available. However, we need sustainable base funding, and one way we can get there is through funding a \$0.01 sales tax increase. Voters will have the option to vote on this matter during the April 1 election. Some people may ask, why isn't the 33% increase on our utility bills enough? Remember, according to the rate study conducted by ORWA, it was recommended that we increase utility rates by 100%, which we understood was not practically feasible. A \$0.01 sales tax increase will bring in about \$130,000 in additional revenue if passed, so that will help. Even though we have been awarded about \$750,000 in grant funding, due to recent executive orders and changes in the federal government, some of that funding is delayed, on hold, or otherwise frozen.

B. Procurement Card

- a. Recently, the TOW acquired a procurement card program and issued the cards to staff. This has allowed us to save on postage from mailing checks, and our card usage has generated over \$327 in cashback for the Town's General Fund.
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- b. There are limits and notifications in place to ensure proper use.
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- C. Help to Others (H2O) Program is up and running for donations. This is a program where donations from citizens help to fund neighbors in need with their TOW utility bill. The program is being administered by Delta Community Action, and we are happy to be in partnership with them. Any citizen who would like to donate can do so on our website or



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find the post pinned on our Facebook page. We need to get at least \$500 in donations for Delta Community Action to be able to start helping neighbors in need.

Trustee Branham at this time gave his Farewell Address as his time as a Trustee ends in April. He requested that the townspeople realize that this position is a voluntary position and that they should express their concerns and complaints with grace, compassion and professionalism.

8. Executive Session

A. Board of Trustees may consider retiring into Executive Session for the purpose of: Consideration and discussion of personnel matters including the employment, hiring, appointment, promotion, demotion, disciplining, or resignation of the Town Administrator, in accordance with 25 O.S. Section 307(B)(1).

B. The council may consider and take any action deemed appropriate as a result of the Executive Session.

No action was taken.

9. Adjournment Time: 7:20pm

Trustee, Joel Siria

Clerk, Kasey Leshner

