

Minutes from the Commission Meeting held on

July 14, 1997

The Mayor and Board of Commissioners met in regular session Monday, July 14, 1997 at 6:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room at City Hall.

Mayor Simpson called the meeting to order with Commissioners Davis, Raper, Brock, and Middleton present. Invocation was given by Commissioner Davis.

Motion was made by Middleton, seconded by Brock to accept the minutes of the June 1997 meeting. All ayes.

Motion was made by Middleton, seconded by Brock to accept monthly billing errors in the amount of \$636.78. All ayes.

Bobbie Dickson was present representing CAGE. She informed the Board that the CAGE group was seeking permission from the Mayor and Board of Commissioners to build a stage at the Community Park. She stated that they were hoping to finish the project by September 27th of this year in order to hold a bluegrass festival. Commissioner Davis informed the Board that this was a project that the Board had been working on for several years and that he fully supported it. Davis then made a motion that the Board support CAGE in this effort and possibly donate what the city could afford to for the project. Motion was seconded by Middleton. All ayes.

Jeri Bryant then informed the Board that she had received some information from MTAS concerning city court but that they would be sending more to her and that she would inform the Board of their findings as soon as she received it.

The Board then discussed a request that the Board sign a subordination agreement on the Darrell Stiles Rehab located on Long Street. The Board stated that they had never received a request for this before and that they would have the city's attorney review it before they took any action concerning it.

Public Works Director Joe Cline updated the Board on the water tank repairs and the clean up of the alum sludge pond.

Motion was then made by Davis, seconded by Middleton to donate \$1000.00 to the Englewood Recreation Association football program. This will be \$250.00 for four teams. All ayes.

Motion was made by Davis, seconded by Middleton to donate \$150.00 to McMinn Marymount 10 & under girls AAU basketball team. All ayes.

The Board then discussed the annexation of the Lion's Club property located off Zion Hill Road. Joe Cline informed the Board that water, garbage pick-up and fire hydrants

were already in use in the area. The Board instructed the city attorney to draw up an ordinance concerning this matter.

The Board then discussed the gas contract with El Paso Energy. El Paso is requesting that the city sell back to them the city gas stored on the Tennessee Pipeline. This would be a savings of \$3000.00 per year to the city. Mr. Craig Harris had informed the Public Works Director that this would not create a future shortage of gas for the city. The Board stated that this would have to be put into writing before it could be considered.

In reference to city property acquired through delinquent tax sale, Attorney Jeri Bryant stated that she was checking into municipal use of the property and the possibility of the city donating property to Habitat for Humanity.

Billie Koppa then asked what the status of the Etowah Water Contract was and the letter sent to the customers from the Mayor concerning it.

Mayor Simpson stated that the letter was sent to inform the customers of how he felt about the situation concerning the water contract.

Ms. Koppa stated that she felt that the letter didn't dispute the contract. Raymond Roach then informed the Board that the town had 243 customers living on a fixed income of less than \$500.00 per month that paid a minimum water bill. He stated that they were paying \$5.00 for 2500 gallons of water and \$7.00 for 2500 in sewer. The Etowah price would be \$6.50 for 2000 gallons of water and \$9.06 for sewer. He ask who would pay for the Etowah water for a major fire, filling the municipal pool, flushing fire hydrants or the town's infrastructure. He also stated that the town had a \$750,000 investment in the water plant.

Commissioner Davis stated that a letter was received from the state stating that Englewood needed to look for an alternate water source. The Englewood Water Plant was built for a 20 year life expectancy and it was now well over 30 years old and that the state had taken the city's sign down due to the situation at the water plant.

Mr. Roach stated that this was because the Board had not taken care of the plant. That the filter had never been cleaned.

Davis stated that the filters had been cleaned since he was on the Board and that he could not answer for actions of prior boards. He stated that the city looked at several options. Drilling wells was not feasible. He and Joe Cline were present at a meeting with Hiwassee Utility District, but the cost was too high. The town then began negotiations with Etowah. He stated that water from the Hiwassee was 98% pure coming out of the river and that the city could retire their debt by purchasing the water for \$1.06.

Customer Marie Kimball was present asking that the city change their water adjustment policy because she had a leak under a concrete pad and had to pay a \$300.00 water bill as she was not eligible for an adjustment. Commissioner Bob Middleton informed her

that the city is not responsible for leaks beyond the meter, that the customer was responsible for their lines. Ms. Kimball did not think this was fair.

Mayor Simpson then returned to the subject of the water contract with Etowah. He stated that there were important factors to consider, such as, guaranteed pressure at the Mars Hill crossing or without grants the city would lose pumping stations. He stated that he had requested negotiations with Etowah, but had never received a response from them. He stated that the only time he had talked with anyone that he had been told that Etowah had signed a contract.

Mr. Roach asked what the rush had been to sign the contract. Davis responded that grants applications had to be made.

Darrell McConkey stated that Jack McCormick had informed him that no letter had ever been sent instructing Englewood to look for an alternate water source.

Simpson stated that the recent test performed on Englewood's water had turned out great. Ms. Koppa stated that she did not buy that. Mr. Roach stated that Ms. Koppa was not a quality control specialist.

Reed Johnson then informed the Board that when he turned on his faucet that his nose burned. Commissioner Middleton stated that Etowah was asked to sell water to Englewood at a wholesale rate. Etowah had said that they did not do this. Mr. Middleton stated that later it was discovered that Etowah sold water to Reliance at a wholesale rate of ninety-one cents.

Frances Johnson, 302 Second Street, presented photos of a drainage problem at her residence and asked that the city correct it. The Board stated that the maintenance department would look into it.

The Board stated that the pool closing date was set for August 15, 1997.

Motion was made by Middleton, seconded by Brock to adjourn the meeting. All ayes.

Edward Simpson
Mayor

Deborah Morgan _____
Recorder