

**MINUTES OF THE AGENDA WORK SESSION
November 15, 2015 – 6:00 pm**

**To Set the Agenda For The
December 10, 2015 Council Meeting**

The East Ridge City Council met pursuant to notice on November 15, 2015 at East Ridge City Hall to set the agenda for the December 10, 2015 Council Meeting and other items.

Mayor Lambert called the meeting to order.

Present were: Mayor Lambert, Vice Mayor Gravitt, Councilmember Cagle, Councilmember Manning, Councilmember Sewell, Interim City Manager Williams, City Attorney North, and City Recorder Middleton.

Old Business Discussion:

ORDINANCE NO. 1000 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE TO AMEND TITLE 8, CHAPTER 2, SECTION 8-212 OF THE EAST RIDGE MUNICIPAL CODE (ORDINANCE NOS. 555, 858 AND 905) TO ALLOW FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BEER PERMITS WITHIN TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET OF ANY RESIDENCE (2nd and final reading) – Mayor Lambert stated this is regarding distances between residences and establishments that sell beer. It is on tonight's regular meeting agenda for first reading.

ORDINANCE NO. 1001 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE, TO AMEND THE EAST RIDGE ZONING ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE NO. 481), WHICH AMENDS TITLE 14, CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE VI, SECTIONS 108 THROUGH 110 OF THE EAST RIDGE MUNICIPAL CODE, AS IT RELATES TO ON-PREMISE AND OFF-PREMISE SIGN AND BILLBOARD REGULATIONS (2nd and final reading) – Mayor Lambert stated this is regarding revisions in the sign ordinance and is also on tonight's regular meeting agenda for first reading.

New Business Discussion:

Declaration of Surplus Property – Chief Williams stated that staff is working on a list and will have it ready for the next meeting.

Other:

Councilmember Cagle had nothing at this time.

Vice Mayor Gravitt stated that since council just received the final version of the sign ordinance this afternoon, he would like to table voting on the ordinance. This will be considered in tonight's regular meeting.

Councilmember Sewell stated he would like to go ahead and discuss the sign ordinance in the regular meeting even if Council decides to table it.

Councilmember Manning had nothing at this time.

Mayor Lambert reminded everyone about the Christmas parade on November 21st at 6:30 pm.

The meeting was adjourned.

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE**

**November 12, 2015
6:30 pm**

The East Ridge City Council met pursuant to notice on October 29, 2015, 6:30 pm at East Ridge City Hall. Mayor Lambert called the meeting to order.

Councilmember Manning gave the invocation. All joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present were: Mayor Lambert, Vice Mayor Gravitt, Councilmember Cagle, Councilmember Manning, Councilmember Sewell, Interim City Manager Williams, City Attorney North, and City Recorder Middleton.

Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes October 29, 2015 Agenda Work Session
- B. Approval of Minutes October 29, 2015 Council Meeting
- C. Approval of Minutes November 2, 2015 Called Meeting

Councilmember Sewell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cagle, to approve the consent agenda. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

Communication from Citizens:

Glen Meadows, 6521 Ringgold Road, owner of Wally's Restaurant, reminded property owners that they have the right to vote in City elections. He also asked the Council to consider letting owners of existing billboards to upgrade to their LED signs. Mr. North read from the Charter regarding property owner's right to vote. He stated the property has to be in the individual's name.

Matthew DeGlopper, 706 Pyron Lane, discussed the sign ordinance and use of LED lighting in billboards. He stated they should be dimmed at night and shut off when malfunctioning. He also believes they should be turned off when the business is closed. Mr. DeGlopper also discussed the Façade Grant Program and stated that businesses leasing property should be able to apply for the grant.

Glen Meadows asked to speak again. He stated he is planning to apply for the Façade grant program. He also stated that he owns a LED sign and does not want to turn it off when he is closed on Sunday.

Account Specialist Qualls stated we did not carry over the funds for the Façade grant from the previous year and only \$50,000 was budgeted for this year. The Mayor stated we need to build up funds for the grant and let it carry over from year to year.

Brian Murphy, owner of a sign company at 5345 Ringgold Road, stated he agrees on limitations to the LED signs. He also stated he has sold some LED signs and permits were issued before the restrictions were put in place. Vice Mayor Gravitt stated these would be grandfathered in.

Communication from Councilmembers:

Councilmember Manning had nothing at this time.

Councilmember Sewell stated that East Ridge High School will play Chattanooga Christian again on Friday night and asked for everyone's support.

Councilmember Cagle invited everyone to go to the Christmas Light Show at Camp Jordan. He also thanked Code Enforcement for checking on an issue on Dabney Lane.

Vice Mayor Gravitt would like to move Ordinance No. 1001, the sign ordinance, to the beginning of the business items before Old Business.

Mayor Lambert announced that the Christmas Parade will be on November 21st at 6:30 pm. He suggested that Council have a workshop on November 18th or 19th at 6:15 pm to have Mark Mamantov, our Border Region Attorney, come to explain the Border Region Act to the Council, and how the incentives work.

Communication from City Manager: Chief Williams asked Account Specialist Qualls to update Council on the 2015 sales tax. She stated we have received the final calculations for FY 2015 and sales tax has increased by 1 million. She stated the City will receive an incentive check in the amount of \$739,000.

Mayor Lambert moved Ordinance No. 1001 to this point in the agenda.

ORDINANCE NO. 1001 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE, TO AMEND THE EAST RIDGE ZONING ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE NO. 481), WHICH AMENDS TITLE 14, CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE VI, SECTIONS 108 THROUGH 110 OF THE EAST RIDGE MUNICIPAL CODE, AS IT RELATES TO ON-PREMISE AND OFF-PREMISE SIGN AND BILLBOARD REGULATIONS (1st reading) –

Mayor Lambert stated Council just received the final version of the sign ordinance earlier today. Vice Mayor Gravitt suggested tabling the ordinance and have Codes send out the ordinance again with all the changes highlighted, rather than discussing it at this time. Fire Marshall Custer stated there were only five or six changes were made during the sign ordinance meeting. Mr. Custer also stated we need to work on developing a new zoning ordinance to entirely replace the old one.

Vice Mayor Gravitt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Manning, to table Ordinance No. 1001. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

Mr. Gravitt asked the City Attorney if the moratorium on off-premise signs was still valid and enforceable at this time. Mr. North stated that the moratorium, which he believes is a temporary measure, would not be affected by tabling the sign ordinance. Mr. Custer recommended that off-premise signs be approved on a use on review, after the moratorium is lifted.

Old Business:

ORDINANCE NO. 998 – Public Hearing – Mayor Lambert opened the public hearing. No one came forward to speak in favor of or in opposition to the rezoning. Sherrill White, one of the owners, stated the property is currently zoned for 28 townhouses, but he wants to rezone to R-1 in order to build 20 single family cottage-style houses. The Mayor closed the public hearing.

ORDINANCE NO. 998 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE, TO AMEND THE ZONING REGULATIONS AND THE ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE TO REZONE THE PROPERTY LOCATED IN THE 5300 BLOCK OF ROOSEVELT ROAD FROM RT-1 RESIDENTIAL TOWNHOUSE DISTRICT TO RZ-1 ZERO LOT LINE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (2nd and final reading) – City Attorney North read on caption. Councilmember Manning made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Gravitt, to approve Ordinance No. 998 on second and final reading. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

ORDINANCE NO. 999 - AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE, TO AMEND ORDINANCE NO. 989 ENTITLED “AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE REVENUE FOR THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2015 TO JUNE 30, 2016 APPROPRIATING THE SAME TO THE PAYMENT OF EXPENSES OF THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT . . .” BY CHANGING THE REVENUE OF THE CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND AND DESIGNATING A PORTION OF THE FUND BALANCE OF THE STATE STREET AID FUND AND CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND BY CHANGING THE EXPENDITURES OF THE STATE STREET AID FUND AND CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND (2nd and final reading) - City Attorney North read on caption. Vice Mayor Gravitt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Sewell, to approve Ordinance No. 999, on second and final reading. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 2496 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE, AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE, SALE, AND PAYMENT OF A CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY BANK CAPITAL OUTLAY NOTE IN A PRINCIPAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$775,000 PURSUANT TO THE INFORMAL BID PROCESS – City Attorney North read on caption. This item had been pulled from a previous agenda. Ms. Qualls stated that when the loan was made, it was not approved by the State Comptroller, as is required. Councilmember Manning made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Sewell, to approve Resolution No. 2496. Vice Mayor Gravitt disclosed that the president of Cornerstone Bank is the treasurer of his campaign. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 2527 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE, TO APPROVE AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITIES OF COLLEGEDALE, LAKESITE, RED BANK, SODDY DAISY AND THE TOWNS OF LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, SIGNAL MOUNTAIN AND WALDEN FOR EMPLOYMENT OF A GOVERNMENT RELATIONS PROFESSIONAL – Mayor Lambert stated this is something that Council approved in part at the last meeting by hiring Davis Lundy to lobby against the counties receiving state shared revenue funds. Now that we have the interlocal agreement, he stated it needed to be properly voted on. He wants to make sure it is done correctly. The agreement calls for a 120-day notice if the City does not plan to renew

yearly. Mayor Lambert stated if the proposed bill is approved for the County to take part of the state shared revenues, the City would lose one-half to 1 million in sales tax annually, forcing the City to either raise property taxes or cut services. Vice Mayor Gravitt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Manning, to approve Resolution No. 2527, with a limit of \$20,000. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

New Business:

ORDINANCE NO. 1000 – AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE TO AMEND TITLE 8, CHAPTER 2, SECTION 8-212 OF THE EAST RIDGE MUNICIPAL CODE (ORDINANCE NOS. 555, 858 AND 905) TO ALLOW FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BEER PERMITS WITHIN TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY FEET OF ANY RESIDENCE (1st reading) – City Attorney North read on caption. Mayor Lambert stated this stemmed from recent issues with the Walmart and Save-a-Lot beer applications. These businesses had to come before Council to request a variance because they were within 250 feet of residences. This change will only apply to the distance to residences, not churches and schools. Councilmember Sewell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Manning, to approve Ordinance No. 1000 on first reading. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

Vice Mayor Gravitt readdressed Resolution No. 2496. He stated that he disclosed that the Cornerstone Bank president is his campaign treasurer. However, he forgot to mention that several members of the Cornerstone Board of Directors made contributions to his campaign. Mr. Gravitt asked the City Attorney if Council should revote. Mr. North stated that another vote was not necessary; there was no conflict.

RESOLUTION NO. 2528 – A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EAST RIDGE, TENNESSEE, AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OR HIS DESIGNEE TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT IN AN AMOUNT OF \$525,000 TO PROVIDE SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS – City Attorney North read on caption. Amanda Miller stated this would be a pass-through grant, with the funds going to WWTA for sewer improvements. There is no cash match from the City. Councilmember Sewell made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cagle, to approve Resolution No. 2528. The vote was unanimous. Motion approved.

Discussion of Restroom Issues at Camp Jordan – Director Martin stated that after discussion in the last work session, staff has put together a plan to update the restrooms. They have purchased plastic materials and are taking out all the metal materials that rust. They are installing a new roof on the storage building and on the restroom that Exit 1, LLC remodeled. Mayor Lambert would like to see everything uniform in the park, with all blue metal roofs.

Discussion/Take Action Concerning the City Attorney's Compensation – Councilmember Manning and Vice Mayor Gravitt – Vice Mayor Gravitt stated the attorney and his firm have taken on a lot of issues with the City. Mr. North gave a summary of everything he does for the City, including being involved in seven lawsuits, attending administrative hearings, and writing ordinances and resolutions. Mr. North is asking for a 10% increase, which is \$1,000 additional per month. Vice Mayor Gravitt disclosed that Mr. North and his wife have contributed to Mr. Gravitt's campaign. Councilmember Sewell stated that Mr. North has already received a \$30,000

raise. Mayor Lambert stated that he personally voted against raises for employees during the budget and stated he would be a “hypocrite” if he voted against an increase for other employees and then give a raise to the City Attorney. He would prefer to wait until the next budget. He stated we have spectacular employees and would love to give them a raise, but believes this should be a bridge year to build the reserves back up. The Mayor also stated that employees only received a \$520 raise in this year’s budget. Mr. Gravitt quoted amounts that had been paid to the former City Attorney, John Anderson in the past, which included severance pay in his last year. Councilmember Sewell stated that Mr. Gravitt ran on getting rid of Mr. Anderson, but now Mr. North’s salary is being increased. Mr. Sewell stated it is a “slap in the face” to all employees that Mr. Gravitt voted against a raise for them because he wanted to build up the surplus and now he wants to increase the City Attorney’s pay. Mr. Sewell also stated that former City Attorney John Anderson is the reason we have the Border Region. Councilmember Manning asked the Mayor what were the “ladies” doing as far as bringing in business. The Mayor stated that they are very close to bringing a project into the City. Vice Mayor Gravitt made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Manning, to increase the City Attorney’s salary by \$1,000 per month. Roll call vote: Vice Mayor Gravitt - yes; Councilmember Cagle - yes; Councilmember Manning - yes; Councilmember Sewell - no; Mayor Lambert - no. Motion approved.

Discussion of Advertising for Design of I-75 Exit 1 Interchange Project – Chief Williams stated this was brought up previously. He asked if Council wants to pursue this now or do Phase 1 first. Mayor Lambert believes we need to move ahead with this project.

Discussion of Issuing City Identification Cards for Retired Employees – Councilmember Manning – Mr. Manning stated that some of the retired police officers would like an ID card showing they have retired from the City of East Ridge. He stated this would not be to carry a gun. Mr. Manning made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Gravitt, to approve issuing ID cards for retired employees. Chief Reed stated that under Tennessee state law, there is a provision for officers who retire in good standing to be able to obtain these ID cards, and it includes a gun permit. If they are not in good standing, they are not eligible. The cards would have “Police” on them. Chief Williams stated he has a list of employees who are all ex-police officers who are requesting these ID cards. The Chief stated that not all of these employees left the City in good standing. One was in an accident in a city vehicle and left the scene, another was arrested by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and one was in court recently for some type of criminal activity. Account Specialist Qualls stated since these cards have “Police” on them, it could be a liability to the City. At this time, Mr. Gravitt withdrew his second. Mayor Lambert stated this is the first time he has heard of this issue and is not prepared to vote on it tonight. Mr. Manning amended his motion to remove “Police” from the ID cards but later withdrew the motion until staff can meet with our insurance carrier, TML.

A workshop was scheduled for November 19, 2015 at 6:15 pm to discuss the Border Region Legislation. No action will be taken at the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.