Crossett city council met in special session November 21, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. in the lobby of the Crossett Administration Building.

Present: Mayor McCormick, Clerk/Treasurer Jesse Walthall

 Council Members: Freeman, Rowe, Foster, Rodgers

Absent: City Attorney James Hamilton, and Councilwoman Candace Jeffress

Mayor McCormick announced that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the financial statement for October, 2016 as well as consider a proposed ordinance finalizing the 2015 budget. A copy of the proposed ordinance and financial packages were presented to the council.

Motion by Councilman Freeman, seconded by Councilman Foster to have Mayor McCormick read proposed ordinance for the first reading in its entirety. Roll call vote. All vote yes, motion passed. Mayor read proposed ordinance 2016-6. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Rowe to suspend the 3-day reading rule and read for 2nd reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Mayor read by title only. Motion by Councilman Freeman, seconded by Councilman Knight to further suspend the rules and read for 3rd and final reading by title only. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed and Mayor read by title only. Motion by Councilman Foster, seconded by Councilman Rowe to adopt Ordinance 2016-6. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Ordinance is adopted.

Councilwoman Rodgers raised questions concerning revenue shortages in the October financial statement. She also asked about how the judges salary will be funded for 2017. Mayor McCormick explained that the city of Crossett, the city of Hamburg and the Ashley County Quorum Court will each pay a portion of the judges salary. The city’s portion will come out of the Crossett General Fund.

The council discussed the new Department of Labor law concerning salaried positions and overtime. The law states that employees with salary positions should make a minimum of $47,476. There are several exemptions for this law, however. City officials have looked into this and feel that it will apply to all salaried positions except department heads. However all agree that it would not be fair to exclude department heads from the law. According to the law, overtime must be compensated at either 1 ½ wages or comp hours at 1 ½ per hour. Councilwoman Rodgers asked an estimate of number of overtime hours for department heads. Police Chief Cruce stated that his will average around 10-12 hours per month. Fire Chief Bo Higginbotham estimated his around the same. Rodgers suggested that a spreadsheet be prepared to look at considering how much this will add to the city budget.

Mayor McCormick informed the council that he would like to add a drainage department in 2017. A budget is already set up for drainage, but has not officially been established.

Councilwoman Rodgers asked council to consider going to once per week trash pickup and better schedule task for the street and sanitation department. She feels that this will free up time for the department to more effectively operate.

Councilman Foster explained an issue with the sewer department and Jack Reynolds. Several years ago, Mr. Reynolds developed the land along Fairview Road which houses several businesses from Road Mart to Hometown Tire. He also installed a sewer system and lift station for the area. He has maintained the system over the years. The system does not meet city standards or state of Arkansas standards. Mr. Reynolds has asked the Crossett Sewer Committee to take over operation of the system and they have refused because it doesn’t meet regulations. Mr. Reynolds has now informed the committee that he will turn the electricity off. This will cause sewer to back up into the businesses. The council can direct the sewer committee to take over the system or get a court injunction to demand that Mr. Reynolds continues operation. The court injunction may or may not go in the city’s favor. Motion by Councilwoman Rodgers, seconded by Councilman Freeman to instruct the Crossett Sewer Committee to assume maintenance and upkeep of the sewer system. Roll call vote. All vote yes. Motion passed.

Mayor stated that he has asked an inspector to help determine value of the city buildings at 201 and 307 Main. They should be getting these estimates together within the next few weeks.

With no other business, the meeting adjourned.

Jesse Walthall, Clerk/Treasurer Marshall S. McCormick/Mayor