

December 11, 2008

The Russell Springs City Commission held their regular monthly meeting this date at City Hall at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were Raymie Hutchison, Jeanne Hudson, Claradon Wilson, Jeramy Coffey, Richard Roy, Eric Selby, David Blakey, Brittany Emerson, Joe Irvin, Ray Barrett, Wayne Gaskins, Timmy Hudson, Richard Wooldridge, Matthew DeHart, Don Byrom, Hollis DeHart and Wendy Burton.

1. Mayor Hollis DeHart called the meeting to order.
2. **Timmy Hudson made the motion to accept the November 13 minutes. Mayor DeHart seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**
3. **Ray Barrett made the motion to pay the bills. Wayne Gaskins seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**
4. The Commission heard the 2nd reading of Ordinance 2008-09 an Ordinance repealing Ordinance 2007-21. **Ray Barrett made the motion to approve Ordinance 2008-09. Wayne Gaskins seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**
5. The Commission heard the 2nd reading of Ordinance 2008-10 an Ordinance adopting a Modern & Accurate Legal Description. **Mayor DeHart made the motion to approve Ordinance 2008-10. Timmy Hudson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**
6. Ricky Barnes submitted a letter of resignation from the Planning & Zoning Board. **Mayor DeHart made the motion to appoint Kelly Malone to the Planning & Zoning Board. Ray Barrett seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**
7. The Commission heard the 1st reading of Ordinance 2008-11 Ordinance updating Personnel Policies & Procedures.
8. Mayor DeHart made the following statement to the Commission/Council & Public: **I am required by law (KRS 83A.130 Section 3) to make a report to the Commission/Council and to the public and I quote, "Report to the council and the public on the condition and needs of the city as deemed desirable, or as required by ordinance, but at least annually."**
This being the last meeting of the year, I think it appropriate to make that report now.
The finances of the city face many challenges in the near future. It is no well-kept secret that our economy is stressed about as high as it has ever been. We know of all the billions of dollars being spent bailing out financial institutions and we know how the state government is nearly 500 million in deficit budget. Very little money for grants is going to be available over the next couple of years. There will be no bailout for little towns like Russell Springs. Therefore, we at the local level must take measures to insure a certain liquidity in the city budget. Now is the time to begin a program that will see us through the rough times that may lie ahead.

One of the reasons we must take a hard look at our expenses comes from our retirement system. The new employer contribution rates for cities, counties and other members of the county employee retirement system for non-hazardous employees will be 17.37% and for hazardous duty employees will be 35.61% The city will be paying 21% more for hazardous duty employees and 29% more for non-hazardous employees. The rate at which the city has to pay retirement increases at a predetermined rate year after year. Additionally, each year we must set aside about \$320,000 for retirement of bonds. By 2013 if a policeman is making \$35,000.00 per year the city will be required to pay \$16,000.00 per year on retirement. That is over and above what he/she has to pay out of their salary! For a police department with eight officers, with an average salary of \$35,000.00 that would be \$128,000 in retirement expenses just for the police department. Payroll taxes bring in a significant amount of money to cover expenses of the city. It should be obvious to anyone that income to the city is going to be greatly reduced by layoffs and closings of businesses.

It takes about three and three quarter million dollars to operate this city for one year. The bulk of that money comes from property taxes, franchise taxes, payroll taxes, vehicle taxes, licensing fees and state and federal grants. Our property tax is very low but the taxpayer out there is bombarded with every tax imaginable and many cannot afford any more taxes. Therefore that is off the table! However, there are things we can do and that we are going to do. First, the city spends several thousand dollars a year in dry-cleaning, laundry bills and uniforms. Police must have uniforms but they are going to have to take over their own laundry bills. Water-sewer, parks, streets will also be responsible for their own clothes and laundry bills. There will be no additional police cars bought this year even though one is still listed in the current budget. Additionally, I have decided that we will also forego hiring an additional policeman at this time. This should produce a savings of about \$60,000.00-\$70,000.00 for the next fiscal year. I will direct the heads of departments to curb expenses for travel by parking as many vehicles as is possible to save on petroleum expenses. Keep in mind the city of Russell Springs has water and sewer lines all over central and northern sections of Russell County and have many miles to drive daily in maintenance of these lines. I want to say this to the employees of the city. There will be some hard challenges to face during the next couple of years. J.D. Chaney of the Kentucky League of Cities said on 21 November, "... the rate increase" (speaking of the retirement contribution only) " will force many cities to reduce essential personnel and cut or eliminate many basic services." I will do everything I can to balance our needs to our resources. With your assistance we may be able to get through this

downturn without losing personnel because we need every person we now employ.

This city is in desperate need of upgrading our infrastructure. Some of our streets are deplorable. Some streets are so narrow someone has to get in the ditch if they meet another car. People's lives are at danger because of the lack of sidewalks. But, because we have never had appropriate building codes, because many houses have been built so close to the street and because state regulations requires so much clear space for sidewalks, it becomes almost infeasible. Be that as it may, we are going to try and build sidewalks in the most critical areas and I am committed to some blacktopping as we can afford it.

When I ran for Mayor of Russell Springs I was 95% sure I would do my best to fire Joe Michael Irvin! I had become a victim of all the rumors and innuendos that were being spread. When I won the election I began an investigation on my own into the so-called illegal activities of the Chief. It did not take very long to discover that I had been wrong in my evaluation of the Chief. When I started looking at the evidence, when accusation after accusation was demonstrated to be untrue, when Grand Juries exonerated him and when various state agencies supported him and when a particular element of the community does everything possible to get him removed, I had to ask myself WHY? Everyone has to draw his or her own conclusions. Now the internet is full of rumors of how I am afraid of Joe Michael. How Joe Michael has something on me, etc.

Over the last two years I have found Joe Michael to be an excellent investigative officer. I have found him to be honest and ethical. Neither the Chief of Police nor the Assistant Chief has ever been found guilty of anything as involves this city! You cannot convict a person on hear say or rumor! I am not saying Joe Michael and I have the same philosophy, we do not. But I cannot expect everyone to see things exactly as I do however, the employees of this city understand, if they do something illegal and associated with their position, they will face the consequences of city policy and the law. There are some who contend money is wasted on legal issues as they concern the Chief and Assistant Chief. Some of them people are the very ones bringing suits in the first place and causing the city to have to defend itself. Some of them are the very ones causing the problems! So, if I defend the city or some city employee, they contend that I am wasting money. If I find no reason to fire someone they want fired, in my opinion, to give certain litigations more validity, then I am afraid of the employee or some employee has something on me! That is absurd!

Lawsuits have been brought against this city that are totally frivolous and in my opinion they are filed with two things in mind; 1)if they can get the Chief of Police fired they will then be able to say "You see, even the city knew he was crooked and that would be followed by massive lawsuits against the city; 2) I believe that it is the intention of

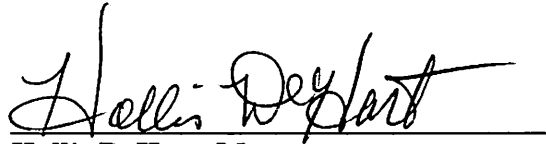
some to file so many suits that the city will lose it's insurance and therefore have no choice but to relent to their demands.

Another reason, we believe suits have been brought against the city is for harassment of city employees and the city in general and as a smoke screen. We believe suits have been brought against the city as smoke screens to obscure other cases. If presently, or in the future, I discover some employee, regardless of who they are, is guilty of breaking the law, they will be promptly dealt with. To this point, after having done extensive investigations on my own, after grand juries have vindicated, after having read extensive investigations by state agencies, I find no reason to fire anyone! Now in all likelihood I will get sued for reporting to the Commission and the community as I am legally obligated to do. However, I will be in good company. Here is a partial list of attempted charges and accusations of criminal activity made against the city or some of the employees thereof; destruction of property, burglary, harassment of witnesses, running witnesses off the road, organized crime, perjury and murder. Practically everyone who has tried to defend them selves or to bring a stop to this madness has become a victim of the rumor machine or an attempt has been made to indict them or sue them. Here is a partial list of some targets some one is trying to indict or sue:

The Commonwealth of Kentucky, The Kentucky Bureau of Investigation, The Office of the Attorney General, Cyber Crime Division, Kelly Hensley, (Individually and as an agent of KBI), John Dudinskie, (Individually and as an agent of the KBI), David James, as commissioner of the Kentucky Bureau of Investigation, George Wilding, as a supervisor of the KBI, Joe Michael Irvin, Individually and as Chief of Police, Scott Hammond, Individually and as a State Police Detective, Jamie Rogers, Individually and as Asst. Chief of Police of Russell Springs, Hollis DeHart, Individually and as Mayor of Russell Springs, City of Russell Springs, Wayne Gaskins, Individually and as City Commissioner, Ray Barrett as City Commissioner, Richard Wooldridge as City Commissioner, Timmy Hudson as City Commissioner, Larry Rogers, Individually, David Smith, Individually, Joey Hoover, Individually and Representative Jeff Hoover, Greg Wells, Editor of the Times Journal, Individually. On other occasions Rose Tarter and Sammy Tarter, her son. It would not surprise me if someone tried to sue the city for conspiring with Peter Rabbit to break into Mr. McGregor's cabbage Patch. In my opinion there are some desperate people involved in these suits and attempted indictments against the state, city and/or the city employees. Scurrilous and libelous statements are posted on the internet that is disgraceful. Some would destroy anyone or anything even this town, if it would further their cause. They would destroy reputations and careers without giving it a second thought. In my opinion they are desperate and there vicious people. I believe we are a nation of laws

and not of men. When I face my Lord I want Him to say that I have done the best I could. I will not be pressured by any segment of the community to do things I know to be morally or legally wrong! And that is just the way it is!

9. Timmy Hudson stated the Fire Dept. was in good shape, eight letters had been mailed to property owners for cleanup.
10. Ray Barrett stated the new park maintenance building is almost Complete; park is locked, but walking trail is still being used; estimated cost per square foot for maintenance building is \$6.25
11. Ray Barrett made the motion to adjourn. Timmy Hudson seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.


Hollis DeHart, Mayor

ATTEST: Wendy Burton