

**CITY OF BEL-RIDGE
BOARD OF ALDERMAN
PUBLIC HEARING
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JULY 22, 2021
6:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER- The City of Bel-Ridge Board of Aldermen meeting was called to order by Mayor Willie Fair on Thursday, July 22, 2021, at 6:00 PM.

ROLL CALL Board of Aldermen Present Board of Aldermen Absent

Alderwoman Davis
Alderman Watts
Alderman Tope
Alderman Whitaker
Alderman Robinson
Mayor Fair

Alderwoman Abernathy

Following roll call, the City Clerk report a quorum was present.

Motion to approve the agenda by Alderman Watts and seconded by Alderwoman Davis, all in favor vote received.

CDBG

Chancellor Thomas was in attendance to explain the purpose of having another public hearing on a conflict-of-interest concern. He explained that this was the opportunity to give the public to voice their concerns and to get more understanding of the conflict of interest. He explained the process of the information being collected and provided before the County Counselor Office for review to determine if there is an apparent conflict of interest and then they will forward information to HUD. Chancellor explained that a Conflict of Interest has to be addressed when discovered. If not, the City could be at risk of a call back on funds being used for the project. Chancellor stated that this hearing is in the best interest of the city to approve the project.

Alderman Watts ask Chancellor to go ahead and address the Conflict of Interest.

Chancellor explains, only on a Board which is part of the decision-making process and board members living on the street or own property, that is considered a potential conflict of interest. It gives HUD the chance to decide

if this is a legitimate conflict. It would unjustly benefit someone who is a decision maker in the use of CDBG Funds.

Alderman Watts asked if a board member lived on the street and that board member negate themselves from voting would that release the conflict of interest? Chancelor responded that on any street a board member lives on, that is put up for potential use of funds and still is considered a conflict.

Alderman Tope comments that there was misinformation given and that on the one block of Ramona that is needing repair, he only owns one piece of property, the block that is under the request for the block grant funds to be used. Alderman Tope spoke to the city attorney and he mentioned that the attorney said there is no conflict of interest when fixing a public street and that he has already tried contacting the County Counselor. Alderman Tope disagree with the conflict of interest. Alderman Tope has seen the misinformation that was provided that he owns multiple units within the project area, which he claims is not true.

The City Clerk explained, that on the application there is an area that asked about conflict of interest. City Clerk checked the box. Alderman Tope asked the City Clerk why did she check the box and her response were that she was aware that he owned several homes on Ramona.

Chancelor explained again that it was truly in the best interest of the city and that it is not to say they suspect any wrong doing. And that the determination of the conflict comes from HUD, where the approval comes from. HUD gives County the funds and HUD are the ones that give the authority to give approval and how. If HUD says, "Yes" and concur then there is no objection. Then the process can begin and they make sure the city gets a new road. To make sure the funds are protected this process is worth it, states Chancelor.

Alderman Watts ask Chancelor whether a list be provided to show what CDBG funds can be used for. Chancelor gives the Board different options on things a CDBG can be used for and that a list will be sent to City Clerk to give to the Board.

RESIDENTS COMMENTS

Alderman Watts made a motion to open meeting for public comments and Alderwoman Davis seconded. All in favor vote received.

Rebecca Cogshell

She was not aware that streets had been chosen and over time there are a lot of bad streets and some worse than Ramona. Board should be trying to fix the worse streets over Ramona. Ramona has been fixed many times. And who determined that Ramona is the busiest street or the worse? Residents were not notified.

Chancellor explained the method of posting notices for Public Hearing meetings. Which he has verified that the notices were posted in 3 separate public places throughout the city.

Alderman Tope explained to Ms. Cogshell the reason the project was picked. Water lines replacement are being done and they wanted to do streets and hopefully save money to tie in City project with water company to get a better and cheaper price.

Mary Manns

Asked why didn't the Board give a reason to public for the street to get done with the information that was just provided? She stated Ramona is not the worst street and that Sargent was horrible. Maybelle also is terrible. She asks the Board how did they come up with Ramona? Ms. Manns asks, the Board if they were considering other streets?

Alderman Tope mentions that maybe the City can get a Bond Issue to get all streets fixed.

Motion to close out Public Hearing by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderman Whitaker, all in favor vote received.

Discussion for 2022 CDBG will be discussed at a later date and time.

Board proceeds to discuss the CDBG funds and other options it could be used for.

Board returned to making a motion to vote on conflict of interest. Alderman Tope objected.

Motion made by Alderman Robinson and seconded by Alderman Watts, all in favor vote taken and Alderman Tope abstained and Alderman Whitaker voted no. Vote results 3 yes and 1 no, one abstained.

Chancellor asked for clarification on which is the Board voting on to proceed with application or not to proceed?

Alderman Watts made a motion to proceed with the application concerning the conflict of interest and Alderman Robinson seconded.

ROLL CALL

Alderwoman Davis	Yes
Alderman Watts	Yes
Alderman Tope	Abstain
Alderman Whitaker	Abstain
Alderman Robinson	Yes
Alderwoman Abernathy	absent

Vote passed to proceed with application.

RESCHEDULING OF EMPLOYEE MEETING

Alderman Watts would like to set up an employee meeting with the staff to discuss all the changes that are occurring with the Police Department, what their responsibilities will be and the changes it will impact with other departments. Mayor Fair agreed that a date need to be set.

Alderman Tope asked, why do all employees need to be met with?

Alderman Davis stated there is nothing wrong with having an employee meeting.

Meeting with staff with 3 board members and the mayor set for July 27 at 10am. Alderman Watts spoke with the State Auditor about having a meeting with staff. The state auditor confirmed if it is not with entire board, you do not have to post. Only if it's a full board or quorum will it have to be posted.

Alderman Tope commented that the State Auditor is not correct.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn meeting by Alderman Watts and seconded by Alderwoman Davis, all in favor vote received.

The meeting minutes were taken and transcribed by City Clerk, Andrea Jones.

July 22, 2021, board meeting minutes were approved by the Board this 10th day of August _____ 2021.



City Clerk