

Town of Fifty Six  
Home of Blanchard Springs  
6564 Hwy. 14 Fifty Six, AR  
(870)757-2225

Mayor: Earnestine McDaniel

Recorder/Treasurer: Christina Byrd

Town Council Meeting  
January 13, 2025

Members present: Aaron Byrd, Eric Williams, Rick VanEvera, and Lisa VanEvera

Visitors present: Tim Hudspeth, Larry Treat, Rebecca Ferguson, Scott Wible, Richard and Dove Wible, Mike and Judy Balentine, Sylvia Williams, Linda Baca, Matthew and Lisa Linn, and Delvin Freeman

Meeting was called to order by presiding officer, Mayor Earnestine McDaniel.

A motion to accept the previous months minutes was made by Aaron Byrd and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rick VanEvera. ALL IN FAVOR.

A motion to accept the financial statements was made by Rick VanEvera and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Eric Williams. ALL IN FAVOR.

A motion to pass ordinance 124 approving the city mileage at 1.8 was made by Eric Williams and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Aaron Byrd. ALL IN FAVOR.

Big Flat sent a FOIA for the rate study, council meeting minutes, and monthly meeting minutes. Mayor of Big Flat picked up all paperwork. She paid \$25.00 as it was 25 pages.

Ballard & Company will be doing our water audit this year as Welch & Couch said they are overloaded with customers. Ballard & Company will get back in touch with Earnestine to let her know what they will charge. They are the only CPA that said they would do it.

We are due for a legislative audit for the years 2022 and 2023. Due to lack of auditors working for the state, Earnestine was informed they will do 2022, 2023, and 2024 all together and will do it sometime in 2025.

Mayor McDaniel has reached out to USDA about getting funding to renovate the water towers. She had to leave a message. She was advised by the Governor's office they were pretty certain USDA would help.

The city receive a \$8,000 check to reimburse the city for paying Travis Trammell. Travis did repair work at 2 pump stations that was affected by a hit by lightning. The total cost was \$13,000 and the city had a \$5,000 deductible.

Aaron Byrd has been hired on as weekend water help. He was hired in September. He will assist with water duties on the weekend and when available during the week. Delvin will be training him on all pump stations, including Big Flat connection.

Lisa VanEvera asked that a letter be sent to residents inside city limits urging them to fill out their census this year, including the financial part. The income section is important to get a more accurate account of the city's resident's income. This plays a key role in qualifying for grants. Earnestine will also put it in the paper and it will be posted on the city's website and put on customer monthly bills.

Aaron Byrd talked to the council about the water advisory board meeting. He informed council that the committee would like to see the money set back for the reserve on financial statements. The committee would like see someone trained to take Delvin's position in the event Delvin decides to retire or something happens to him or he simply needs help. The subject of the life expectancy of water lines was brought up. There is concern of the city being able to afford to replace water lines. Also it was discussed the need for a way to monitor the amount of water Canney Mountain Horse Camp is getting. They would like to see a camera put in place by the hydrant. Aaron Byrd also told council that the committee would like to express gratitude and thanks to council as they have seen positive changes happening.

Lisa VanEvera asked if cameras have been installed at pump stations. She was informed they have not. She expressed the need for cameras to be put up.

Aaron Byrd brought to the council's attention there are people on Highway 87 that have expressed interest in being annexed into the city limits. He asked if this is something council wants to consider. It was agreed more information on how it works be checked into. Lisa VanEvera expressed that the city does not have the money to take on such a project. She asked that Earnestine check with Mountain View to see what goes into it. Rick VanEvera agreed it could be a big expense the city could not take on.

In fire department business: Chief, Aaron Byrd, informed everyone there will be first responder class and test on January 29-30. Everyone that is participating in the training has been asked to not miss these dates. The big pump truck that was received from forestry has now been release to the Fifty Six Fire Department. The title, registration, and license plate was all received in the mail today. The truck needs some work and Aaron will discuss with the fire department members what the next step with the truck should be.

Tim Hudspeth filed a complaint that White River Planning was asked to attend this meeting and later asked not to come. The residents were not informed that White River Planning would not be attending.

A motion to adjourn was made by Eric Williams and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Aaron Byrd.  
ALL IN FAVOR.

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Mayor, Earnestine McDaniel

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Recorder/Treasurer, Christina Byrd