

Bolivar City Council Meeting  
Monday, May 19, 2025  
6:00 P.M.

The Bolivar City Council met in regular session, Monday, May 19, 2025, at the Bolivar Municipal Building with the following in attendance:

Present:

Mayor Julian McTizic  
Councilmember Michael Brown  
Councilmember Melvin Golden  
Councilmember Todd Lowe  
Councilmember Larry McKinnie  
Councilmember Caroline Miller  
Councilmember Suzanne Rhea  
Councilmember Chris Williams  
Councilmember Tommie Woods

Others present: Carri Beth Rhea, Sarah Rice, Mick Vinson, Jim Nuckolls, Chief Lynn Price, Chief Mike Jones, Anthony Ford, Jerry Mayfield, Ricky Watkins, Dylan Hill, Leon McNeal, Russ Kelly, BJ Bolyard, Jordan Stack, Duncan McKinnie, Bethany Miller, LaFreida Gatlin, Cliff Crawford, and Calvin Howell.

Mayor McTizic called the meeting to order, welcomed the guests in attendance and those who were watching on social media. Mayor McTizic asked Councilmember Woods to lead the group in prayer and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Mayor McTizic asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the April 14, 2025 regular council meeting. There being no corrections, Councilmember Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilmember McKinnie to approve the minutes as written. All voted "Aye."

**Mayor's Report:**

- A. Mayor McTizic noted that the city offices would be closed on May 26<sup>th</sup> in observance of Memorial Day.
- B. The mayor presented a Proclamation for National Children's Mental Health Acceptance Day. Ms. LaFreida Gatlin came to the front for the presentation. Ms. Gatlin explained to the council and others in the audience what TN Voices does and how they help advocate for children. She then thanked the mayor and welcomed other members in the community that were part of TN Voices to come to the front for the presentation.

**Public Comments: NONE**

**Standing Committee Reports:**

**Electric- Mayor McTizic**

The Bolivar Energy Authority Board met on April 28, 2025, for their regular monthly meeting. The following action was taken by the board:

- The board moved the May meeting to May 27, 2025 at 4:30 pm.
- The board approved the October 1, 2025 rate increase of 1.4%. This increase will cost the ratepayers an additional \$2.00 per month. This was done to keep up with the rising cost of materials.

- The board accepted and approved the bid from Farris Construction to build a pole shed at the lot on North Madison Street to store the extra fiber reels for maintenance.
- The board reappointed Mr. Ernest Jones to a new five-year term on the board starting 7/1/25. This reappoint will be sent to City Council for approval.

#### **Utilities- Jim Nuckolls, Director**

The Bolivar Utility Board met on May 7<sup>th</sup> and discussed the following:

- The Utility department has been assisting the Street department with the repairs on Tate Road.
- The board forwards a favorable recommendation on passing the TEAC Gas Contract Resolution.
- The board forwards a favorable recommendation of accepting and approving the bid for the water plant's chemical room rehab to Grinder Taber Grinder, Inc. This is part of the ARPA grant that was received. The following bids were received:
  - Grinder Taber Grinder, Inc- \$52,510.06
  - Mid-South Construction Services- \$85,000.00
  - Barnes & Brower, Inc. - \$94,676.00
- Gas prices are at \$0.67 for May.

#### **Fire- Chief Lynn Price**

- Total Fire Calls- 77 (70 city, 7 county), Civilian Fire Injury-0, Fire Service Injury-0
- EMR Assist Calls- 61 (61 city, 0 county)
- Training Hours- 197
- Smoke Alarms Installed- 14
- Fire Code Inspections- 22
- Public Relations Event- 1
- Chief Price let the council know that the ladder truck has been down and it was approved to get it repaired. It will cost a little over \$13,000.00. He let them know that the city has arranged for Somerville, Jackson, Henderson, and other fire departments on stand by if the need for a ladder truck arises. Councilmember Williams ask Chief Price what all was wrong with the ladder truck. The chief replied there was a lot and it was an older ladder truck.

#### **Police- Assistant Chief Eddie Henson**

- Calls for service- 570
- Citations- 171
- Accidents- 17 (0 fatal, 0 injuries, 17 property damages)
- Arrest- 56 (14 juvenile, 42 adult)
- Special Events- THSO Safe Streets Task Force -12
- Training Hours- 247
- Councilmember Woods asked Ast. Chief Henson if the department was at full staff. Henson replied they are currently fully staffed. Woods asked how many officers are ran on the weekends, Ast. Chief Henson noted that he was not sure off the top of his head that he would need to look at the roll call. He also stated that it changes from weekend to weekend especially on holidays.
- Councilmember McKinnie asked how many were considered full staff. Henson replied 24-25 officers.

#### **Parks and Recreation- Anthony Ford, Director- absent**

- The youth summer golf league will begin on Wednesday June 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Lifeguards have been signed up for the certification class at the University of Memphis. We plan to open the city pool on June 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- We have filled the washouts at Pleasant Run Park on the walking trail.

- Councilmember Williams asked Mr. Ford if there were any grants coming up that would help pave the trail at Pleasant Run Park. Mayor McTizic spoke up and stated that application submission approval that was done at last month's council meeting was the grant. There was not enough funding to get both Sand Beach and Pleasant Run paved this go around. If awarded the grant, Sand Beach Lake will be paved this year and once that is complete the city intends to apply for the same grant again to have Pleasant Run trail paved.
- Councilmember McKinnie asked about the trail to the city park. The mayor stated that that will be concrete work since the city owns those sidewalks.

#### **Street and Sanitation- Jerry Mayfield, Superintendent**

- Tons taken to landfill: 310.80 commercial, and 165.11 residential for a total of 475.91 tons.
- Picked up brush and leaves.
- Mowed and weed eat around town.
- Bulky item pick up has ended.
- Continued work on Tate Road.
- Councilmember Woods asked when the roads will be paved for the year. Mr. Mayfield stated that they are usually done the second to third week in June.
- Councilmember McKinnie asked what roads are going to be paved. Mr. Mayfield noted that he and the mayor got together on the list of roads but he did not have the list with him.
- Councilmember Miller asked what the anticipated date was to get Tate Road back open. Mr. Mayfield answered that they are working to get it open as quickly as possible, and with all the rain lately it has put them behind schedule. He noted that he hopes to have it open within the next few weeks weather permitting.
- Councilmember Williams thanked Mr. Mayfield and his team, as well as other city workers for all of their hard work and long hours to get Tate Road repaired and reopened.

#### **Library- Becky White, Director**

- Financials: Donations, Copies, Fines, and Faxes- \$987.75
- Total Programs: 4, Total Participates: 20, Estimated February patronage: 438
- Meeting Room: Bookings- 13, Guests- 24
- Circulations Report: Material Circulation- 1,310, Computer Users-288, Wi Fi users- 2,370, READS (Regional E-book and Audio Book download system)-493, History Room-12, Microfilm Reader usage-2
- Councilmember Williams asked Mrs. White to let the council know who was hired as the Assistant Library Director. She noted that Hannah Thompson had been hired back as the Assistant Library Director.

#### **Compliance/Zoning- Ricky Watkins**

- Building Consultations-10
- Building Permits Written- 4
- Building Inspections- 2
- Plumbing Inspections- 0
- Mechanical Inspections- 0
- Courtesy Notices Issues- 25
- Councilmember Rhea asked if property owners had been notified about their grass not being mowed. Mr. Watkins stated that he had sent out several letters and was in the process of sending additional ones out.
- Councilmember McKinnie asked if the city was going to be mowing the house on the corner of Fisher and Jones that they had mowed in the past. Mr. Watkins noted that he will get with the mayor about that.

#### **Community Development and Tourism- Dylan Hill, Director**

- Participated in the Hardeman County Coalition on Youth Mental Health. This program will bring activities to our youth through a program called TN Voices. The first activity will be a painting class focused on

childhood mental health awareness on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Timbers building. Youth Engagement Specialist Ashanty Moore is the contact for this event.

- Welcomed the Arkansas Land and Community Development Corporation for their Community Engagement Summit held in at city hall.
- Traveled with 8 senior adults to the Paris Fish Fry for the first Timeless Treasures outing.
- Attended the county branding unveiling.
- Councilmember Williams asked Mr. Hill if there will be weekly activities for senior adults. Mr. Hill stated that there were not weekly activities planned at this time. The Timeless Treasures group is starting off with short distance trips and one to Gatlinburg in November. Mayor McTizic spoke up stating that there are monthly activities at the library and asked Mrs. White to tell the council what all they are doing for the seniors.

#### Old Business:

**A. Second Reading of Ordinance 25-004: An Ordinance Amending the Official Zoning Map of Bolivar for property located at 550 Vildo Road from B-1 (Neighborhood Business) to H-1 (Hospital Medical)**

Mayor McTizic noted this Ordinance will rezone the property located at 550 Vildo Road from B-1 to H-1 where the new hospital is being built. He then asked for a motion to adjourn from Executive Session to Public Hearing, Councilmember McKinnie made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Williams to adjourn to go to Public Hearing. All voted "Aye". There being no public questions nor comments concerning the rezoning of the property located at 550 Vildo Road from B-1 to H-1, Councilmember Woods made a motion, seconded by Councilmember McKinnie to reconvene to Executive Session. All voted "Aye". The property owner at 550 Vildo Road submitted a rezoning application request to Bolivar Regional Planning Commission to have this property rezoned from B-1 to H-1. The Planning Commission forwarded a favorable recommendation to the City Council to approve this rezoning request. Mayor McTizic asked for a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 25-004, Councilmember Williams made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lowe to approve the second reading of Ordinance 25-004 amending the official zoning map by rezoning property at 550 Vildo Road from B-1 to H-1. All voted "Aye".

#### New Business:

**A. Resolution 2025-008: A Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of Natural Gas from the Tennessee Energy Acquisition Corporation (TEAC)**

This Resolution authorizes the City of Bolivar Utility Department to buy natural gas from "TEAC" for a contracted price. The mayor explained that the city has done this for several years and it has been a huge benefit. The city is able to offset the price of gas to customers if the cost goes up substantially by contracting through TEAC. Councilmember Rhea made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Golden to approve Resolution 2025-008 authorizing the Utility department to buy natural gas through TEAC. All voted "Aye".

**B. Approval of Bid Award for the Water Plant Chemical Room Rehab through the ARP Grant**

Mayor McTizic asked the council for approval of the bid award for the chemical room rehab at the water plant. He explained this is part of the ARPA Grant the Utility department received for water and sewer. The engineers, A2H, sent a letter recommending the city approve the bid from Grinder Tabor Grinder, Inc. The bids that were received were:

- Grinder Taber Grinder, Inc- \$52,510.06
- Mid-South Construction Services- \$85,000.00
- Barnes & Brower, Inc. - \$94,676.00

Councilmember Williams made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lowe to approve the bid award to Grinder Tabor Grinder, Inc. in the amount of \$52,510.06. All voted "Aye".

**C. Approval of Plans of Services for Annexation of Sand Beach Lake and Pleasant Run Park**

The mayor asked the council for their approval for Plans of Services for annexation of Sand Beach Lake and Pleasant Run Park. He explained that the city did own these properties, however not all of the properties are within the city limits. He noted that nothing will be changing with the parks, he would just like for all of the properties to be in the city limits. The approval of Plans of Services is required by the State for annexation. Councilmember Rhea made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Golden to approve the Plans of Services presented. All voted "Aye".

**D. Approval of Funding for Southwest Development District Economic Development**

Mayor McTizic brought before the council the approval to help fund the Southwest Development District Economic Development. He stated that Southwest Tennessee Development District (SWTDD) is putting together an Economic Development team that will market all of Southwest Tennessee for industry recruitments. Joe Barker, Executive Director, of SWTDD has all Southwest Tennessee counties to pay \$15,000.00 each to support the initiative. Mayor McTizic noted that Hardeman County only paid \$7, 500.00 and he would like for the city to pay the remaining half to support SWTDD which will be up to \$7,500.00 if Whiteville does not contribute. Councilmember McKinnie asked what does the Hardeman County Chamber of Commerce do for the city and what the difference was between Hardeman County Chamber and SWTDD. Mayor McTizic stated that SWTDD is all of Southwest Tennessee, and Hardeman County Chamber is just for Hardeman County. He noted that SWTDD helps with grant writing, planning services, the Historical Commission, senior services, and several other programs. Councilmember McKinnie asked so what has the chamber done, and what are we paying them. Councilmember Williams spoke up and stated he was on the Chamber Board, and then proceeded to tell Councilmember McKinnie what all the Chamber does for the city as well as the county. He noted the Chamber has a great director, and she works hard to connect all local businesses within the county as well as promote them which is an estimated 300 businesses. Mayor McTizic asked if there were any further questions regarding the funding for SWTDD Economic Development. There being no further questions, Councilmember Rhea made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Miller to approve the funding up to \$7,500.00 for SWTDD Economic Development initiative. All voted "Aye".

**E. Approval of BEA Board Reappointment- Earnest Jones**

The BEA Board has voted to reappointment Mr. Earnest Jones for another term. They are sending a request to the city council to approve this reappointment. Councilmember Lowe made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Golden to approve the reappointment of Mr. Earnest Jones to the BEA Board. All voted "Aye".

**F. Approval of New Bank Account for LPRF Grant Retainage**

Mayor McTizic stated that the city needed to open up a new bank account for the LPRF grant to hold the retainage amount of contractor fees. He noted that this was a state law. Councilmember McKinnie made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Brown to open a new bank account for the retainage amount for the LPRF contractor fees. All voted "Aye".

**G. John Werner with Cumberland Securities- Financial Feasibility Report for Multi-Use Sportsplex**

Mayor McTizic welcomed Mr. John Werner to the front to go over the city's financial feasibility report for a planned multi-use sportsplex combined with a YMCA. The plan is to buy the National Guard Armory that the state shut down and offered for the city to have an option to purchase it before putting it on the market. The armory will be remodeled to house the YMCA with an addition to a pool and new gymnasium as part of the sports-plex. Mr. Werner gave each of the council members a copy

of the Summary of Debit as well as the Preliminary Funding Report he prepared. He noted that the city's general fund has roughly \$2 million in outstanding debt that is payable through 2051. He then asked them to look at the Preliminary Funding Report he prepared. Mr. Werner noted that from the Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR) the multi-use sportsplex project which includes the purchase of the armory is roughly \$21 million. He suggested to the city that in order to fund this project that it be broken down in phases. Mr. Werner suggested that the city go ahead and purchase the armory and proceed with the remodel in the first phase and it will be an estimated \$4 million. He is very comfortable with the city moving forward with the \$4 million of debt at this time. He knows that USDA is an excellent loan partner, and has a fixed rate over a 40 period of time. Mr. Werner also suggest that the city consider a revenue enhancement. He stated that if Bolivar chooses to go forward with this project or not, he highly recommends they consider a revenue enhancement because it has been close to 20 years since the last property tax increase. He also noted that in order to move Bolivar forward they need to invest in economic development to bring additional revenue to the city. By raising the property tax just, a little, this will help move the needle to pay off Bolivar's debt.

Councilman Williams asked how often do cities raise their property taxes, Mr. Werner stated on average it is about every 4 years; however, Bolivar has been close to 20 years. Councilmember McKinnie asked if he is suggest raising sales tax and property tax to fund this project. Mr. Werner stated he is not suggesting to raise the taxes for this project but in general yes, the city should consider raising property taxes since it has been close to 20 years of the last increase. He also stated that the city could keep doing what they are doing and no one would criticize them for it however if it is the will of the sitting council to move Bolivar forward these are some of the things they need to consider. Councilmember Golden asked Mr. Werner what on the negative sides to this project, he replied by making no changes the city would run out of money. He noted that if it came to that point the State officials would come in and set a tax rate for the city to where they would not have to come back to Bolivar to review the city's financials for another 10 years. He said the other side of that was that Bolivar's property values are a little below the national average. He noted with the current property tax rate a penny roughly generates around \$88, 000. Mr. Wener noted that the positive side is that the federal government is a very favorable creditor and if the city runs into bumps along the way they will work with the city. Councilmember Williams asked if he suggest that the city pay off some of their debt from the fund balance to free up some capital. Mr. Werner explained that currently some of the city's fund balance is sitting in a LGIP account, and other accounts that have a very favorable interest rate. That the city is earning more on interest than the interest they are paying on their debt and the city needs to be careful about spending the fund balance. Councilmember Miller thanked Mr. Werner for doing these reports and presenting to them, that this makes her feel better about the project and doing it in phases. Councilmember Williams asked Mr. Werner in his professional opinion can the city afford to fund the first phase of this project at \$4 million, he replied that if everything stays constant yes. Williams then asked if he suggest the city pay for some to fund this project out of their fund balance since the city has a very healthy fund balance. Mr. Werner replied that he would be careful about touching the fund balance because some of it is already restricted and it would be depleting some of the city's cash, however if the city chose to do that it will be fine. Mayor McTizic spoke up and stated that the state is asking for approval to purchase the armory tonight and to pass a Resolution. They have been holding the building for the city but do plan on putting it on the market soon. Councilmember Miller asked what was the sale price again, he stated \$975,000.00. Mayor McTizic stated that once the current LPRF grant is closed out he plans to apply again to help fund the ballfields. He would really like for the council to approve to start somewhere with the project and approve the purchase of the armory. Councilmember Golden asked if the \$4 million would include the purchase of the project. The mayor stated it would, and would allow for the remodel at \$2.2 million, pool, and gym. The city would only pull the funds needed to proceed. Councilmember Miller asked if there was community facilities grant the city could apply for. The mayor stated that the city currently has one open with the remodel for the NeighborHub but he does plan to apply for another one once that project is complete. Mayor McTizic noted that the YMCA can apply for

a community grant that will help fund the pool. Councilmember Rhea made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Williams to move forward with the \$4 million loan to fund phase 1 of the multi-use sportsplex. Councilmember McKinnie voted "Nay", all others voted "Aye". Motion carried.

Mayor McTizic asked the council before adjourning that the state asked that we passed a Resolution that simply states that the city will purchase the armory. He the presented Resolution 2025-009 that approves the purchase up to \$975,000.00. Councilmember Williams made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lowe to approve Resolution 2025-009 that approves the purchase of the armory up to \$975,000.00. Councilmember McKinnie sustained, All others voted "Aye". Motion carried.

There being no further business to discuss, Councilmember McKinnie made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Woods to adjourn the meeting. All voted "Aye".

Attest:

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Mayor

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City Clerk & Recorder