

Council Minutes  
January 7, 2021 – 7:00 p.m.  
Regular Meeting

The Pinson City Council met in regular session in Council Chambers at 4410 Main Street, on Thursday, January 7, 2021. Councilor Roberts led the invocation. Councilor Tanner led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**Roll Call:** Marie Turner, City Clerk, called roll of Pinson City Council with the following council members present:

Councilor Tanner  
Councilor Walker  
Councilor Roberts  
Councilor Churchwell  
Councilor Kirkland  
Mayor Cochran

**Minutes:** Councilor Kirkland offered a motion to waive the reading of the December 29, 2020, minutes. Councilor Walker duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for all in favor to say “aye” all opposed to say "no". Mayor Cochran, “let the record reflect the ayes carry unanimously”. Councilor Churchwell made a motion to accept the minutes as written of the December 29, 2020 meeting. Councilor Tanner duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for all in favor say “aye” all opposed to say "no". Mayor Cochran “Let the record reflect the ayes carry unanimously”.

**Committee Chair Comments:**

**Finance:** Councilor Tanner offered a motion to pay the bills in the amount of \$86,437.25, a copy of the bills schedule is attached. Councilor Roberts duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran asked if there were any highlights on the bills. Councilor Tanner mentioned the Jefferson County Sheriff’s Department for \$34,000.00 and Hand Arendall for \$20,619.00, which is about half the bills. Mayor Cochran mentioned that these were both essential services and called for all in favor to say “aye” all opposed to say "no". Mayor Cochran "Let the record reflect that the ayes carry unanimously."

**Mayor’s Report:** Mayor Cochran spoke to the CARES Act money that was made available by the federal government for Jefferson County and administered by the Jefferson County Commission, who did most of the hard work for most municipalities in Jefferson County. Mayor Cochran explained that we submitted items based on the criteria that the money was spent due to COVID relief on items that may not have traditionally been bought otherwise. The mayor further explained that the money spent on public safety to pay sheriff’s deputies salaries as well as our own public safety director. Mayor Cochran explained there was a specific amount of funding allotted to the city but that we had to back into it before it could be available to us. Mayor Cochran went on to explain that his first week in office was the last week available to apply and that we worked very hard to gather information and submit everything before the deadline. The mayor said that went on to say that we submitted a little over \$330,000.00 worth of items and

received \$330,000. The Mayor congratulated the city employees for their hard work and the efforts that they made. Councilors Tanner and Roberts also congratulated the mayor and city employees for their extra effort. Mayor Cochran stated that those funds were unencumbered and to be put into savings for one year.

Mayor Cochran reported that Pinson Parks and Recreation office was to be moved to City Hall and opened a discussion about the move. In the discussion that followed, Councilor Churchwell asked questions about staffing at Bicentennial Park and receiving calls for Party Room rentals. Mayor Cochran explained that the Bicentennial Park Office is not the day-to-day office but there will be people there during the summer and other working months and that calls can be put through City Hall's front office. Mayor Cochran stated that there is much more room to store equipment at City Hall than at the Rock School or Bicentennial Park. Councilor Tanner suggested an online calendar/registration system for building rentals, later noting that VC3 could help with that. Councilor Roberts noted that consolidating the offices in this way would conceivably lower energy costs. Mayor Cochran answered a question from Councilor Churchwell, stating that the director's office for Public Works is already located here on campus and having Parks and Rec here as well would be helpful for the two departments, since they already work hand in hand. Councilor Tanner and Councilor Roberts both voiced their support for the idea.

Mayor Cochran asked for an update on the Jefferson County EMA-Covid vaccination distribution. Councilor Tanner reported on COVID statistics in the Jefferson County area, including around six hundred new cases per day in the county which has leveled off, over six hundred people hospitalized, over two hundred people in ICU, and over 100 people on ventilators, and over 300,000 healthcare workers and gave the Jefferson County vaccination number as 205- 858- 2221. Mayor Cochran suspended rules so that Captain Chris Horn of the Center Point fire department could address the issue of who was considered IA response group. Captain Chris Horn said that first responders are part of the IA response group along with healthcare workers and that the vaccines are voluntary but strongly recommended. Mayor Cochran reinstated rules.

Mayor Cochran stated that we are asking for quotes for demolition of 4238 Pinson Blvd, stating that it is our Oak Street building right outside of Bicentennial Park. Mayor Cochran stated that we have been aware that we now actually own it after litigation and we are ready to remove it and will hopefully at some time put signage there for Bicentennial Park. Councilor Roberts stated that this would provide a very nice entranceway to our park and is difficult to build on due to the property a flood plain.

**Old Business:** Councilor Tanner offered a first reading of The City of Pinson Employee Manual. Councilor Roberts mentioned that it was discussed in Pre-Council and has been in discussion with city staff. Councilor Roberts when on to say that while it is not a completely new document it is an updated one and reflects changes in laws and consolidates several city policies into one manual, making it useful for new hires. Councilor Roberts recommended that everyone read through the manual, especially in areas of technology and vehicle use. Mayor Cochran gave credit to Hand Arendalls legal team in drafting most of it and mentioned a small change in the

handbook as an expansion of employee vacation time, after ten years going from twelve days to fifteen. Mayor Cochran went on to ask about a possible an additional of five days after 15-20 years with Councilor Tanner replying that they were sitting on that for now. Mayor Cochran encouraged the Council to take it home and read over it closely and return with any questions or comments.

Councilor Roberts opened a discussion regarding General Obligation refinancing, speaking to the current lower interest rates, his meetings with the mayor, the city's legal team, and Joe Jolly. Councilor Roberts gave some highlights for the public, clarifying that this refinance would result in major savings for the taxpayers. Councilor Roberts went on to say that the rates were not only lower, but we are keeping the exact same term and that the current bond will still expire in 2034. Councilor Roberts mentioned that total savings per year would be approximately \$30,000 a year over the first three years and nearly as much in savings the next four years after that. Councilor Roberts said that the refinance would create a savings of over \$200,000 in interest alone. Councilor Roberts said in summary that he fully concurred with the mayor's proposal to refinance at this extremely low .4% interest rate in an effort to pay off Bicentennial Park, the Rock School, and City Hall by 2035. Mayor Cochran expressed his confidence in Hand Arendall and the people on bond as a great resource working on our behalf in negotiating this refinance, saying that we were moving forward and discussing the S&P rating AA- currently felt the rating would remain the same.

**New Business:** Councilor Tanner made a motion approve the purchase of championship shirts for the PVHS football team, coaches, support personnel, school administrators, band, and cheerleaders in the amount of \$4,605.50 allocated from the discretionary account. Councilor Kirkland duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for any discussion. Councilor Tanner went on to say it was good for us as a city to have a championship team and we need to give back to them since we are the City of Champions.

Councilor Tanner also announced the tentative date for the upcoming championship parade Upcoming Championship parade to be Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, meeting at Winn Dixie parking lot and the parade will start at 10:30. Councilor Tanner explained that the route will be a little different this year and that it will end at the High School Stadium to present the resolution passed last week in honor of the players. Councilor Roberts added that the shirts are good for those who have won the championship and they are also nice way to promote our city, speaking about the positive things that are brought to our community through the exceptional players both past and present. Mayor Cochran called for all in favor say aye all opposed say no. Mayor Cochran, **“let the record reflect the ayes carry unanimously.”**

Mayor Cochran mentioned an ordinance regarding rules of procedure, amending 2012-25, changing precouncil time from 6:30 to 6:15. Shane Black, Attorney, City of Pinson, spoke to some of the language changes included in the proposed ordinance, including the time change and wording change allowing a special council meeting to be announced with less than twenty-four hours' notice in an emergency situation.

Councilor Tanner offered an ordinance regarding rules of procedure, amending 2012-25, changing precouncil time from 6:30 to 6:15. Councilor Kirkland duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for unanimous consent to consider with the following results: Councilor Tanner – yes, Councilor Walker-yes, Councilor Roberts-yes, Councilor Churchwell-yes,

Councilor Kirkland-yes, Mayor Cochran – yes. Mayor Cochran ‘unanimous consent passes unanimously’. Mayor Cochran called for any discussion, explaining that the reason for this change is that precouncil seems to last a little bit longer since he became mayor. Councilor Tanner mentioned that the precouncil is a time to hammer out issues so that we can get to meeting at meeting time. Mayor Cochran called for a roll call vote on the main ordinance with the following results: Councilor Tanner – yes, Councilor Walker-yes, Councilor Roberts-yes, Councilor Churchwell-yes, Councilor Kirkland-yes, Mayor Cochran – yes. Mayor Cochran **“let the record reflect the Ordinance passed unanimously as Ordinance 2021-1”**.

Councilor Churchwell offered a motion to approve attendance of training sessions for the Mayor, Council and Clerks, including to Alabama League of Municipalities in May, and the National League of Cities in March and November. Councilor Walker duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for any discussion. Councilor Tanner stated that clerks attend four meetings. Mayor Cochran stated that this would be a blanket motion allowing these training sessions to occur, going on to explain about the benefits of the training, including gaining legal knowledge and ideas from other municipalities. Mayor Cochran called for all in favor say ‘aye’ all opposed ‘no’. **Mayor Cochran “let the record reflect the ayes carry unanimously”**.

Mayor Cochran suspended rules to allow Eric Winfrey, Director of Public Works to speak about purchasing Christmas Pole Decorations. Mr. Winfrey, gave details about expanding the decorations, stating that ordering early allows for a better selection of lights and mentioning his plans to extend more lights down Highway 75 toward Palmerdale and into Miles Spring and Sweeny Hollow Roads, and the importance of ordering prior to January 31<sup>st</sup> for a 25% reduction in price. Mr. Winfrey answered questions during the discussion that followed. Mayor Cochran reinstated rules. Councilor Kirkland made a motion to purchase the decorations. Councilor Walker duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran asked for further discussion and seeing none called for all in favor to say ‘aye’ and all opposed to say ‘no’. Mayor Cochran **“let the record reflect the ayes carry unanimously”**.

Mayor Cochran asked for a first reading regarding maintenance of wear on the play pad as well the swing set itself at Bicentennial Park playground in the amount of \$5,408.12. Mayor Cochran called for any discussion. After a brief discussion, Councilor Roberts offered a motion for Bicentennial Park playground maintenance in the amount of \$5,408.12. Councilor Tanner duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for any discussion. Councilor Tanner mentioned that it was a good thing to have worn equipment, indicating that the park is being used. Mayor Cochran indicated that in speaking to people in the park he found that the park was appreciated by people from Pinson and other areas in the county. Mayor Cochran called for all in favor to say ‘aye’ and all opposed to say ‘no’. Mayor Cochran **“let the record reflect the ayes carry.”**

Mayor Cochran mentioned a first reading regarding Bicentennial Park picnic tables quotes for which the lowest bid was Uline for \$600.00 for tables which are 8 ft, burgundy, metal, and AOA compliant. Mayor Cochran went on to say it would be further addressed in the next meeting.

Mayor Cochran offered a first reading of quotes for Pinson Valley Youth Sports Complex bleachers. Councilor Tanner asked for additional pictures and Mayor Cochran replied that he

would obtain more. Mayor Cochran also spoke to the importance of ADA compliance and inclusivity.

Councilor Walker offered a motion to approve a request for assistance for field equipment and surface work from the Pinson Valley High School Softball in the amount of \$4,763. 62.

Councilor Kirkland duly second the motion. Mayor Cochran opened the discussion by saying that the Pinson Valley High School Softball, Varsity, JV, and Rudd Middle school all use that field and this money is for work and various pieces of equipment that will help them keep that field in good order. Mayor Cochran went on to say that the work was to be done by Game Day Athletic Services. Councilor Tanner asked about the price. Councilor Walker said that it was \$4,763. 62. Mayor Cochran went on to say that the money came from the school discretionary fund which is available to the council to give out to the schools for different projects and has been signed off by the high school principal as well. Mayor Cochran called for all in favor to say 'aye' and all opposed to say 'no'. **Mayor Cochran, 'let the record reflect the ayes carry unanimously.'**

Councilor Roberts offered a motion to approve a request for an upgrade of the infield of the Pinson Valley High School Baseball field for a total cost of \$6,000. Councilor Walker duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for any discussion. Councilor Roberts mentioned that we had several members of the baseball and the softball team and their coaches in the pre-council meeting who gave a nice presentation about what they were doing and how they were going to keep up the field. Mayor Cochran mentioned that this would also come out of the discretionary fund and asked for any further discussion. As there was no further discussion, Mayor Cochran called for all in favor say 'aye' all opposed say 'no'. Mayor Cochran – **'let the record reflect the ayes carry unanimously'.**

Councilor Tanner offered a motion to approve the purchase of a 2012 Ford Expedition that was being liquidated from EMS E9-11 in the amount of \$8,500. Councilor Roberts duly seconded the motion. Mayor Cochran called for any additional discussion, stating that the vehicle was in extremely nice condition. Councilor Churchwell asked about the vehicle's purpose. Mayor Cochran explained that it would be for general use by himself, Bob, the clerks, and city employees to drive to conferences for example. Councilor Tanner said that you might not feel as safe driving the gray Tahoe to say Montgomery or Mobile. Councilor Roberts asked about the color and was told that it was black. Councilor Churchwell asked about seating and was told by Councilor Tanner that there were eight seats. Councilor Roberts said that it would be a fleet car for general use. Councilor Churchwell asked if this was going to have more than we need. Mayor Cochran explained that this car would replace one of the current fleet cars that was not as nice. Mayor Cochran called for all in favor to say 'aye' and all opposed to say 'no'. Mayor Cochran – **"let the record reflect the ayes carry"**.

Attorney Black spoke to state law and the auction process for liquidating assets such as the gray Tahoe, mentioning that the city must receive fair market value for liquidated assets, though the procedure for how that is determined is left up to the city. Attorney Black said that the city needed to declare the property as surplus and then receive the fair market value. Mayor Cochran said that they would wait until the next meeting to take up a document declaring surplus.

Attorney Black indicated that he and the city clerk could work on documentation once the council agreed on procedure.

**Public Comment:** Mayor Cochran called for Public Comment. As there was none, the mayor asked for comment from the fire department. Chief Gene Coleman of the Center Point Fire Department spoke briefly about the great number of smoke detectors available at the fire department to be installed at no charge and asked that citizens call their office for an appointment. Captain Chris Horn reiterated the importance of closing bedroom doors, an action which helped save an elderly couple in a recent house fire in the city, also mentioning the importance of a working smoke detector in general, especially in the houses of Covid survivors like himself who have lost their sense of smell.

Mayor Cochran told Captain Horn he was glad he had recovered and went on to encourage people to maintain social distancing and wear a mask in public places as an act of kindness, helpfulness, and common sense, mentioning that area cases are on the rise.

Councilor Tanner offered a motion to adjourn. Councilor Churchwell duly seconded the motion.

**Mayor Cochran, 'let the record reflect that the ayes carry and we are adjourned'.**

Adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Turner, City Clerk

**Bills: 1-07-2021**

Alabama Power-	City Hall-	\$1,173.61
	Rock School-	\$2,422.09
	Triangle Park-	\$129.53
	Community Center-	\$195.74
	PHCC-	\$3,273.69
	Powell Ave.-	\$121.02
	PYSC-	\$1,433.90
	Bicentennial Park-	\$2,233.32
	School Drive-	\$187.44
	Innsbrooke-	\$109.96
Hand Arendall Harrison Sale-		\$20,619.82
<b>AAMCA dues-</b>		<b>\$90.00</b>
<b>Paul Pitts-</b>		<b>\$250.00</b>
<b>Vollara-</b>		<b>\$5,189.00</b>
<b>GPS-expenses</b>		<b>\$215.26</b>
Xerox-		\$47.53
Jefferson County Sheriff's Office-		\$34,000.00
VC3-		\$773.15
AT&T-Internet-		
Bicentennial		\$96.90
BSN Sports- PYSC		\$96.30
T-Mobile- Library		\$1,346.69
Dell- Library		\$3,261.82
Kanaopy- Library		\$46.00
Hoopla- Library		\$984.98
JCLC- Library		\$5,781.51
Demco- Library		\$295.68
Midwest Tape- Library		\$871.71
Verizon- (Misc Rd)		\$916.37
Alabama Power- (7/2)		<u>\$274.23</u>
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$86,437.25</b>

Account Balances @ 12/31/2020:

Regions General Fund	\$ 1,131,260.56
Regions MM Capital Fund	2,224.82
Regions Debt.Srv.Rock Sch.	9,134.86
Hometown Library Fund	3,776.00
Wells Fargo 4-6-5	287,167.93
Wells Fargo 7-2	23,539.11
Wells Fargo Misc. Road	6,062.24
Wells Fargo 10 cent tax	13,098.90
Hometown Saving Acct	577,964.56