

MINUTES: CITY OF DECHERD BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN  
 DECHERD, TENNESSEE  
 APRIL 12, 2021

The City of Decherd Board of Mayor and Aldermen met in regular session, April 12, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Hall Council Room.

MEMBERS PRESENT: MAYOR MICHAEL GILLESPIE  
 VICE MAYOR RICHARD GULLEY  
 ALDERMAN PAM ARNOLD  
 ALDERMAN JIMMY WAYNE SANDERS  
 ALDERMAN TAMMY HOLT  
 CITY ADMINISTRATOR REX CLARK

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Dennis Doney, Jerre Hood, Glenn T. Summers, Ross Peterson, Mary Nell Hess, Mike St John, Debbie St John, Becky Sanders, Christopher R. Smith, Kenneth Hughes, J T Mc Bey, Benjamin Duvall, Michelle Peterson, Robert Melzer, D R Young, Kennedy Davis (WCDDT), B J Anderson, Derrick Plattenburg, Andrea Plattenburg, Christy Hanson, Catrina Mann, Regina Taylor, Bill Hess, Justin Stubblefield, Dennis Doney, Bryan Justice (HC), Ross Peterson, Ben Foster, Tyler Womack, Chuck Williams, Jason Cook

Mayor Michael Gillespie called the meeting to order with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Decherd Board of Mayor & Aldermen dated March 8, 2021 was reviewed. Motion made by Alderman Pam Arnold and second by Vice Mayor Richard Gulley to approve Minutes as printed.

Roll Call: VICE MAYOR RICHARD GULLEY - AYE  
 ALDERMAN PAM ARNOLD - AYE  
 ALDERMAN TAMMY HOLT - AYE  
 ALDERMAN JIMMY WAYNE SANDERS - AYE

Motion Passed Unanimously 4 – 0

Financial Report for the Month of March 2021 was reviewed by the Board. Motion to accept was made by Alderman Pam Arnold and second by Alderman Tammy Holt.

Roll Call: VICE MAYOR RICHARD GULLEY - AYE  
 ALDERMAN PAM ARNOLD - AYE  
 ALDERMAN TAMMY HOLT - AYE  
 ALDERMAN JIMMY WAYNE SANDERS - AYE

Motion Passed Unanimously 4 – 0

The Police, Fire, Building Inspector reports were reviewed for the month of March 2021.

Motion by Alderman Jimmy Wayne Sanders to accept Departmental Reports as presented and seconded by Pam Arnold.

Roll Call: VICE MAYOR RICHARD GULLEY - AYE  
 ALDERMAN PAM ARNOLD - AYE  
 ALDERMAN TAMMY HOLT - AYE  
 ALDERMAN JIMMY WAYNE SANDERS - AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 4 – 0

Approved Resolution R – 21 a Resolution to proclaim Mother's Day weekend as Decoration Weekend in all cemeteries.

Roll Call: VICE MAYOR RICHARD GULLEY - AYE  
 ALDERMAN PAM ARNOLD - AYE  
 ALDERMAN TAMMY HOLT - AYE  
 ALDERMAN JIMMY WAYNE SANDERS - AYE

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY 4 – 0

Approved on first reading Ordinance #431 an Ordinance amending Chapter 1 of Title 11, Section 11 – 101 and 11 – 103 of Decherd Municipal Code.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley stated that TML was contacted, and it was of the opinion that the statement in The Decherd Municipal Code Chapter 1 of Title 11, Section 11-101 other public places covered city property and city buildings.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley stated he was not sure what a Class C misdemeanor was.

Safety Director Ross Peterson stated it was a very low fine.

Alderman Tammy Holt stated under State Constitution Max Fine would be \$50.00.

Mayor Michael Gillespie stated he had a statement to read to clarify some points of an alleged Recreation Meeting March 30, 2021 at The Norris Cope Annex Building. This was not a Recreation Committee Meeting or was it an official city meeting as no official business was conducted. This was a group of volunteers to prepare eggs and prizes for the Decherd Easter Egg Hunt. Mayor Gillespie finished his statement and considered the matter closed.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley ask Mayor Gillespie if he could ask some questions regarding the event. Mayor Gillespie stated he considered the issue closed end of discussion.

Citizen' Concerns: Gina Johnson Sims scheduled to speak did not appear

Derrick Plattenburg owner Creations Deli made some statements about Alderman support of downtown businesses and that he supported Mayor Gillespie and Alderman Holt.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley made statement he was in favor of Downtown Business.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley stated that lack of participation by Alderman in the Easter Egg Hunt was due to lack of information.

Bill Hess asks what we are talking about as a sort punishment. Ask who brought it up in first place.

Vice Mayor Gulley stated he had a statement and that he did not contact The Herald Chronicle.

Alderman Tammy Holt stated the source was unknown.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley explained what was said in the paper and that he had not ask for the Mayor's resignation.

Alderman Tammy Holt would like to interject moving forward an elected official cannot be removed unless convicted of a crime or under inditement if he/ she refuses to resign. A City precedes with a recall by referendum. The City sponsors a special election to determines of said official should be dismissed.

Becky Sanders addressed the Board and stated we need better communication.

Justin Stubblefield spoke about various things that was wrong with the Board and City in his opinion.

Catrina Mann stated that no Alderman have been in her business. Made complaints about some of the Department Heads. Stated she had been misdirected on some issues.

Mayor's Communication: NONE

Alderman's Communication:

Alderman Pam Arnold stated she had four points to make.

1. Alderman Arnold stated she would like to make a motion to abolish the Recreation Committee and appoint a new one at a latter date with Board approval.

2. Alderman Arnold second point was there is such a thing as common sense. When you attend any public meeting, you are representing the citizens of our town. Alcohol on any city property is not part our policy, training, our ethics. or values. Alderman Arnold stated she would like to make a motion for a Resolution that prohibits alcohol or anyone that has consumed alcohol on any city property. It would apply to all full-time, part-time, elected officials, appointed officials, and employees whether compensated or not. This would also include any separate board, commission, committee, authority, corporation or other instrumentally appointed or created by the City. The words "municipal" and "municipality" include these separate unities be terminated from their position immediately.

3. Issue concerning how the Mayor is treating our city employees. Alderman Pam Arnold has received several complaints. Alderman Pam Arnold ask Department Heads and City Administrator if Mayor ever cursed you or talked to you in a demeaning manner. Public Safety Director Ross Peterson stated that this puts us in a spot. Vice Mayor Richard Gulley and Alderman Tammy Holt agreed it was a personal issue and should not be handled publicly.

4. Vice Mayor Richard Gulley, Alderman Jimmy Wayne Sanders, and Alderman Pam Arnold are going to turn over complaint to Attorney Jerre Hood for violation of ethics code for calling them "Idiots".

Mayor Michael Gillespie stated he was called "**Half a Brain**".

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley stated no, no he said, "anybody with "Half a Brain" would know". He did not call out by name. So, he stated he had a "Half a Brain" because he knew this.

Vice Mayor Gulley stated he would like to see us in The Herald Chronical for things like rededicating the arch, Easter Egg Hunt, etc. Vice Mayor Gulley stated there is plenty City could do including revitalizing downtown. Stop being in there for bickering back and forth.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley called for two things.

1. Turn over to City Attorney ethics violation regarding calling Alderman IDOT in the paper.
2. Call for a public apology and put it in newspaper.

Alderman Pam Arnold read section B. 4. f. out of Personnel Policies.

Mayor Michael Gillespie apologizes for calling Alderman Idiots.

Various people from the audience spoke out.

Alderman Tammy Holt had a discussion on the status of City Attorney Jerre Hood what his retainer covered and how additional cost would be incurred over an ethics investigation.

Mayor Gillespie stated meeting didn't take roll.

Vice Mayor Gulley stated that the City Mayor meeting with members of a City Recreation Committee on a City sponsored project in a City building therefor you can call it what you want.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley stated Civil action toward the Mayor needed to be taken to avoid future problems.

Alderman Tammy Holt suggested take the amount of fine and put toward City and have a positive outcome for the City.

Vice Mayor Richard Gulley, Alderman Tammy Holt, and various members of the audience agreed to match the amount.

Discussion followed concerning what changes needed to be done to policies to avoid future occurrences.

Mayor Gillespie stated City Administrator Rex Clark made him aware of the policy against consuming alcoholic beverages on City property. The Mayor apologized and stated he was not aware of the policy and it would not happen again.


Alderman Jimmy Wayne Sanders stated he would be submitting a written statement to the Ethics Officer on use of abusive language toward our City employees within the next 24 hours.

Mayor Michael Gillespie stated there being no additional business the meeting was adjourned 7:52 p.m. with Alderman Tammy Holt making motion to adjourn. Second by Alderman Jimmy Wayne Sanders.

Roll Call: VICE MAYOR RICHARD GULLEY - AYE  
ALDERMAN PAM ARNOLD - AYE  
ALDERMAN TAMMY HOLT - AYE  
ALDERMAN JIMMY WAYNE SANDERS - AYE

Motion Passed Unanimously 4 - 0

  
Mayor Michael Gillespie

Attest:   
Rex Clark City Administrator