

While the April 9th Red Boiling Springs City Council meeting seemed to be rolling along rather smoothly as resolutions were carried and ordinances were adopted, it was the 'Any Other Business' item on the agenda that led to a heated discussion between city council member Shelly Dean and City Mayor Kenneth Hollis.

As Dean began to bring up several topics including the broadcast of city meetings on North Central's local channel, inmates being used strictly for mowing purposes and the hiring of another city employee, a copy of city codes being located at the police department for night shift and weekend officers, hiring a back-up city attorney in the event of attorney Jon Well's absence, the surveying of city limits, crossing guard duties being carried out by Animal Control Officer Jerry Young instead of city police officers and grants for revamping the city's downtown area, it was the subject of copy costs that brought on the disagreement.

Resolution #02-12-09, which increased the charges for physical copies of city records from 25 cents per black and white page to \$1, was adopted by the council in February 2009, and also requires a cost of \$1.50 per page for each colored copy and \$1 per page for accident reports.

The resolution carried last February with a vote of 5-1 with council member Shelly Dean voicing her opposition to its passage, which she continued to assert during last week's meeting.

Dean, who said she has been in contact with Alicia Hodge from the Office of Open Records Council for the State Comptroller's Office, began reading a letter she received regarding the legal issues of the passed resolution but was told by Mayor Hollis to stop reading the letter aloud due to the absence of City Attorney Jon Wells.

"I know what Mrs. Hodge said and we don't have a lawyer here," Hollis told Dean. "She's going to be taking up the issue with the lawyer – you're not reading it."

"We have broken law," Dean responded.

"If the lawyer says that after they get together then we have," Hollis added. "Other than that, it's a drop dead issue – move on."

Dean, ignoring the mayor's request, went on to explain Hodge's remarks.

“She said we cannot include any labor when we set the cost. We can only charge what it actually costs the city to make copies and we have to have documentation.”

“We have been through this,” Hollis reiterated. “The council passed it – no more, no more. If I call you down again, I’ll have you escorted out.”

“Well have me escorted out then . . .” Dean said.

Red Boiling Springs Police Officer Jacob Jordan was called upon by Mayor Hollis to escort Dean from city hall but after agreeing to calm down if allowed to finish discussing other issues, Hollis permitted her to stay.

“I told you, if you want to calm down and act like somebody, you can go on,” he told Dean.

“I think that needs to go both ways Mr. Mayor,” Dean replied.

As Dean went on to another topic, the vacancy created by former council member Spivey’s death, she commented on a private conversation she had with the city’s attorney regarding the legalities of appointing a replacement instead of holding an election.

“I would like to know something,” Mayor Hollis then inquired. “You keep calling all of these people and having all of these conversations - when did you become mayor? You called North Central and you called the State on Coby (RBS City Clerk) this week (about copy pricing at city hall), and I don’t appreciate that one bit. When you call the Sate trying to get her in trouble, I don’t like that.”

“It wasn’t Coby,” Dean responded in her defense. “It was about what we did. Coby enforced what we did and what we did was wrong. That’s my issue.”

Council member Bobby Etheridge moved to adjourn the meeting commenting that he was “not going to argue.”

As the meeting adjourned and council members filed out of the room, Dean, a write-in candidate whose city council term ends at the end of this month unless elected to fill one of three seats up for grabs in the April 25th city election, made one last comment to those in attendance; “Even if don’t get elected, I’ll still be here at every meeting.”

In regards to his threat of ejecting Dean from the meeting, Mayor Hollis remarked that she was “out of order, disruptive, loud, and was slapping the table.”

Red Boiling Springs City Council member Lawrence Hollis and City Attorney Jon Wells were absent from the meeting.

In other business:

- Low bidder Tim Kennedy out of Livingston, was approved for a bid of \$249,165 for pipeline work on the city’s CDBG project. In total, five bids were submitted for the project.
- A \$300 donation was approved to give to local Shiners. The donation, included in the city budget, is given annually.
- Resolution #4-9-09 was carried, updating the previous resolution for participants in the Tennessee Municipal League Risk Management Pool.
- Resolution #4-9-09#2 was carried, appointing Macon County Mayor Shelvy Linville to the North Central Solid Waste Planning Board.
- A solar-powered flashing beacon was approved to be installed at the Hwy 52/Hwy 56 intersection. Though the beacon is of no cost to the city, the city will be responsible for maintenance.

- Ordinance #09-1 was approved on first reading, amending charges for court cost due to the new court management computer system.
- A low bid of \$4,228 by Powell & Son Construction was approved for the installation of a sewer line at RBS School. A total of four bids were submitted for the project. The School will take over the line's maintenance after installation.
- Ordinance #09-2 was approved on first reading, amending cross-connections, auxiliary intakes, etc.
- Ordinance #09-3 was approved on first reading, deleting the former cross-connection policy.
- Permission was granted to Josh Moss to paint and repair the Duck and other playground equipment in the city parks at no cost to the city.
- Approval was given to make a final payment of \$17,250 for the city's fire engine. \$14,000 will be paid out of the city's general fund and the remaining balance will be paid out of the fire department's equipment savings account.
- The motion was carried to broadcast RBS City meetings on North Central's cable channel at no cost the city.
- The council approved "looking into" a raise for the city judge to see what the city can afford. Currently, the city judge receives \$200 a month.

"We need to put it in the budget to give him a little bit more," council member Bobby Etheridge remarked. "We don't want to lose him . . . most city judge's make a lot more than that. I'm thinking we could double that, \$400 a month or \$350 a month . . . that's still cheap. He's a done a good job and I think he deserves a little more."

RBS Mayor Orders Council Member to be Escorted From Meeting

Tuesday, April 14, 2009

The next RBS City Council meeting will be held Thursday, May 14th, at 7 p.m. Winners of this month's city council and mayoral election will conduct their first orders of business during next month's meeting.