

Special Called Meeting
Of the
Board of Mayor and Council
Ashland City, Tennessee 37015
July 3, 2012

The Board of Mayor and Council met in a special called meeting on July 3, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the Municipal Building for the sole reason to discuss/act on placing a ban on shooting fireworks.

Present and presiding: Mayor Rick Johnson.

Council present: Awilda Binkley, Lisa Walker, Jimmy Gill, and Chris LaCrosse.

Council absent: Steve Allen.

Others present: Michael Armstrong, Melissa Womack, Dwayne Noe, Chuck Walker, Billy Harris, Tim Adkins, Tony Young, and Phyllis Schaeffer.

Mayor Johnson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Steve Stratton said he appreciates the Council as a homeowner; he is greatly concerned and knows the Council has to make a decision. He hopes common sense should be the decision the Council entertains. We have one of the best fire depts. and police depts. for a city our size.

Mayor Johnson said he would entertain a motion either way to open for discussion.

Mr. Gill said he had a question; today is the 3rd if we decide not to allow fireworks how will the people know. Mayor said we can use the media. Mr. Adkins said they will put it on their facebook site and their news site. Mr. Gill said we are a little behind what will the consequences be.

Chief Walker said that we have already seen a decrease from years past it is going to be hard to get the word out and hard to enforce. There is definitely an increase in danger there is a certain amount of danger to begin with but more so now with this draught. With the humidity at night that helps with the fireworks the city did Saturday night the large sparks pretty much went out. Having extra people on that night they will be able to handle any spot fires his concern is with fields with higher vegetation and older barns. Chief Coulon and I discussed earlier we will do anything but they think it will be impossible to get the word out to everyone. Tonight on the news he heard that communities having the fireworks banned are not enforcing it. There is nothing in our ordinance that allows us to stop it.

Ms. Noe said that when you can show that you have an emergency and especially when it is for public safety you can break the rules; but it is hard to enforce and you have to give notice. Ms. Noe's biggest concern is giving notice.

Chief Walker said we can have a couple of them cruise the area, in the heavy spots in neighborhoods.

Ms. Walker said what about the rest of the county. Chief Walker replied that's always been an issue it's tough to do and hard to predict.

Mr. LaCrosse asked if we can up the coverage. Chief Coulon said I can with overtime and also he will try to get some reserves to come in. Mr. LaCrosse said he thinks it is worth the extra effort.

There was more discussion on safety and covering the area.

Mr. Young said most of the fireworks are on the street not private property. Mr. Young asked if our ordinance addressed fireworks in the parks. Mayor Johnson said it is not addressed. Mr. Young said he

would like to see that changed; in the past they go to Riverbluff and do their fireworks and then don't clean up after themselves. Ms. Noe said that she thinks not having fireworks can be covered. If you think that's a concern you should have someone at Riverbluff. Chief Walker said you can see why other areas ban fireworks all together. Ms. Binkley asked if we could close the parks. Mr. Young replied he has thought of that at least for Bull Run Park but he has to leave Riverbluff open for the fishermen. There Was a discussion how they have not heard any fireworks yet usually 3-4 days before the 4th they hear the fireworks going off maybe people are taking the draught into consideration. Mr. LaCrosse said with extra police on the street if they could put it nicely to use common sense. Mayor Johnson asked Mr. Adkins if it could be advertised that the Council was seriously considering the ban but instead they expect people to use common sense while using their right to use them. Chief Walker said while it is still on our minds we could look at other ordinances and maybe change ours to address this issue that we could announce by a certain date that no shooting will be allowed and maybe a time frame when they can - depending on the weather. After a little more conversation on the amount of fireworks stands we had this year and there being no more discussion the Mayor closed the special meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Rick Johnson, Mayor

Phyllis Schaeffer, City Recorder