TOWN OF HEMINGWAY

MINUTES OF MEETING ON JANUARY 2, 2019

HEMINGWAY TOWN HALL AT 11:00 A.M.

**Present:**  Mayor Grady Richardson, George Sutton-Mayor Pro-Tem, Charlie Carter, Jimmy Chinnes, Doug Joy, John Coker, Joseph Lee-Town Administrator, Chief Bryan Todd, Shamira McCray

ABSENT: Keith Baxley

**Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.**

**Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

**Executive Session:** Executive Session was not held due to the matter did not fit the state statute on item to be discussed.

Mr. Lee stated that we had an officer quit and it has put us in a bind. In the past, we used dispatchers and non-certified officer on duty. Chief Todd and Officer Lambert has been working 12 hour shifts to cover the Town. This gets to be a hardship for them. Mr. Lee would like council thoughts on having the county come in and help with coverage. They will be using an officer that is off-duty for $25 plus benefits per hour. We have been using a dispatcher and if something happens, they call the Chief to respond. Mr. Lee stated that he didn’t like it. He feels that the Town needs to be covered by a certified officer at all times. Mr. Carter asked Mr. Lee what the cost of an employee with benefits. Mr. Lee stated that he wasn’t sure. Mr. Carter stated that if it was around $18.00 then we will be paying the county more than our employee. He feels that we need to look at our wages. Mr. Lee stated that we have done this, and we are in line with most departments around this area. Mr. Sutton asked why we are losing so many officers. Is it the working conditions, job, can’t get along with people? Johnsonville and Andrews aren’t losing officers like we are. Mayor Richardson stated that we need to look at these issues but today is not the time, we need to work on the issue that we have right now. Chief Todd stated that the officer that quit has personnel issues not issues of the department. Some of the issues that the officers complain about is no equipment, take home car and time off. A different schedule has been done to help with the time off issues. Mr. Sutton asked about the other officer that quit. Chief Todd stated that one is going to the Academy in January. He was hired, and his year is over and he is unable to do officer duties. He is able to do clerical work. He has worked as a dispatcher when the county was here to cover. Mr. Carter asked if we get an agreement with the county, how long will it remain in effect. Chief Todd stated until we can get back to full staff. Chief Todd stated that he has interviews but maybe two to three weeks before someone can actually begin work. Mr. Sutton asked where our officers are going. Chief Todd stated to Marion County. Mr. Carter asked what kind of equipment we do not have. Chief Todd stated that they see what the county has. They are getting new vehicles and things. Mr. Carter asked how many municipalities have a take home vehicle. Chief Todd didn’t know of any. Mr. Sutton stated that over the last four to five years, we have lost a lot of officers. Chief Todd stated that it is not the working conditions, it is an easy job. They complain that they can’t go out of Town for calls. Mr. Carter asked what are you asking us to do. Chief Todd stated that we need to let the county help. Mayor Richardson asked Mr. Lee if he wants a certified officer on duty at all times, two officers will have to work. Mr. Carter stated that the county helping will temporarily solve the issue. Chief stated that he would see if the county can have an officer cover at night. Chief Todd feels that we need to have one of them here while the businesses are open. Mayor Richardson told Mr. Lee and Chief Todd to get with the Sheriff’s Office and get an officer to cover at night. Mayor Richardson told Chief Todd that he is hired to run his department and Mr. Lee is hired to oversee each department.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

Sincerely

Samantha Lewis

Town Clerk