

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Council Chambers, City Hall
March 4, 2024

Members Present: Douglas Baker, Mayor
James Johnson
Christian Marshall
Ashley Smith
Todd Zahner

Members Excused: Donna Fletcher, Deputy Mayor
Samuel Lyons

In Attendance: James Wetzel, City Manager
Brian Spaid, Esq., City Solicitor
Harmony Motter, Deputy Manager
T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary
Amanda Power, Community Development
Cindi Power, City of Franklin
Deb Eckelberger, FICDA
Matt Beith, HARB/324 16th Street
Alex Spaid, Dale, Woodard, Gent, McFate
Helen Fielding, The Derrick
Tammy and David Bible, 1247 Liberty Street
Jake Smith, 1346 Elk Street
Travis Siegel, Northwest Commission
Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker International
Roxanne Spaid, Shade Tree Commission
Bev Hart, 1333 Elk Street

Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Resolution No. 26

Mr. Johnson moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Marshall. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Resolution No. 27

Mr. Marshall motioned to approve the minutes of the regular City Council meeting of February 5, 2024, as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PAY THE BILLS – Resolution No. 28

Mr. Johnson moved to pay the bills as presented. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

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CITIZENS' INQUIRIES – None

MICHAEL BAKER INTERNATIONAL – SAFE STREETS FOR ALL “DRAFT” PLAN PRESENTATION

Brian Funkhouser, Project Manager at Michael Baker International, provided an overview of the Safe Streets for All Action Plan that was developed to identify and prioritize areas of safety concern throughout the City, and provide recommendations to reduce and eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries. He explained the City’s public engagement process to get community feedback. The slideshow presentation is filed with the minutes.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS – Resolution No. 29

The following requests came before HARB at its February 27, 2024 meeting:

- 1247 Liberty Street – Remove window and replace with a door
- 1036 Liberty Street – Raze blighted structure

Mr. Johnson motioned and Mrs. Smith seconded to approve both requests as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL TO SUBMIT URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY GRANT APPLICATION – Resolution NO. 30

Mr. Parks announced presented an Urban and Community Forestry grant through DCNR that will fund the development of City-wide strategic tree canopy development plan, a workforce development plan with Venango Technology Center, purchase of tree care equipment, and the removal of twenty-seven (27) trees and planting 108 trees within areas determined to be environmentally distressed, as indicated on the attached map. While he was not able to present a budget to Council, Mr. Parks said he is working with a Tree Risk Assessment Qualified arborist to determine a budget and announced that there are no match requirements for this grant.

Mrs. Smith motioned to approve submitting the grant application as presented. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

BALLFIELD AGREEMENTS – Resolution No. 31

Mr. Wetzel presented the annual agreements with the Franklin Area Men’s Softball League and the Franklin Little League Association. He stated that all terms and conditions of the contract remain the same as previous years.

Mr. Johnson motioned and Mr. Marshall seconded to approve the ball agreements as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

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SECOND READING – BILL NO. 1 – LIMITED EXCEPTION TO OPEN CONTAINER ACT – Resolution No. 32

Mr. Spaid read Bill No. 1, “Limited Exception to Open Container Act,” into the record.

Mr. Marshall motioned to pass on Second Reading of Bill No. 1. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

FIRST READING – BILL NO. 2 – MERCANTILE LICENSE FEE AMENDMENT – Resolution No. 33

Mr. Spaid read Bill No. 2, “Mercantile License Fee Amendment,” in its entirety into the record.

Mrs. Smith motioned to pass on First Reading of Bill No. 2. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PARK AND PARADE ASSEMBLY REQUESTS – Resolution No. 34

Mr. Wetzel introduced the following public assembly requests:

- March 23, 2024 • Fountain Park • FFAC • Easter Egg Hunt
- March 31, 2024 • Riverfront Park • Franklin Alliance Church • Easter Sunrise Service
- May 3-6, 2024 • Fountain Park • Franklin Gardeners Association • May Mart

Mr. Marshall motioned and Mrs. Smith seconded to approve the requests as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Manager –

- PennDOT release bids for the County Liquid Fuels paving. Bids will be received until March 31, 2021 and opened later that evening at the COG meeting in Oil City. Council will formally accept or reject the low bidder at the April meeting.
- Cody Baker, former Meter Enforcement Officer, was rehired to fill the recent vacancy
- The General Authority accepted a \$3.68 loan offer from PENNVEST to be paid off in 20 years.
- The water tank on fire engine 33 is leaking. The fire department received a quote of \$52,750, and plan to remove the tank in-house and have a tank manufactured locally.
- PennDOT contractor, Tri-State Traffic Data, will be doing traffic counts on some City streets to help improve PennDOT’s traffic data inventory for safety management.
- Requested time in Executive Session for negotiations and potential litigation.

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Solicitor –

- Offered assistance to help draft ordinances related to the Safe Streets for All Action Plan
- Requested guidance from Council for their input regarding regulations for internally lit signs
- Requested time in Executive Session to discuss matters of personnel and litigation

Mayor Appointments – None

COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Baker –

- Announced vacancies on the Commission to Remember Our Heroes and Planning and Zoning Commission
- Enjoyed Taste of Franklin

Mrs. Fletcher – None

Mr. Johnson – Discussed his role as an Honorable Knight, going to the local elementary schools and encouraging children to act responsibly.

Mr. Marshall –

- Would like improved communications through the RAVE Alert system
- Received a request from restaurant owners to extend the Sidewalk Café into March to take advantage of potentially warm days

Mr. Lyons – None

Mrs. Smith –

- Thanked the Community Development Department for their efforts in making the City a safe, walkable community
- Hosted a Heart and Soul kickoff

Mr. Zahner – None

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Resolution No. 35

Mr. Johnson motioned to enter into Executive Session at 7:57 PM for the purposes of negotiations, potential litigation, litigation and personnel. Mr. Marshall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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OTHER BUSINESS - None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T.J. Parks", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary