

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
April 5, 2021

Members Present: Douglas Baker, Mayor
Donna Fletcher, Deputy Mayor
James Johnson
Samuel Lyons
Christian Marshall
Fred Mays
Ryan Rudegeair

Members Excused: None

In Attendance: Tracy Jamieson, City Manager
Brian Spaid, Esq., City Solicitor
Harmony Motter, Finance Director
James Wetzel, Fire Chief
Charles Gibbons, Code Enforcement Officer
Michael Gorman, Resource and Development Assistant
T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary
A.J. Titley, Venango Newspapers, Inc.
Dillon Provenza, Venango Newspapers, Inc.
Aly Delp, Explore Venango
Holly Gibbons, 1253 Liberty Street
Kathy Yeager, 928 Liberty Street

The meeting was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA - Resolution No. 31

Mr. Johnson moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Resolution No. 32

It was noted that Chief James Wetzel had not been identified as being present at the March meeting. With that correction, Mr. Baker moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 1, 2021, as corrected. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PAY THE BILLS - Resolution No. 33

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

CITIZENS' INQUIRIES – None.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS – Resolution No. 34 & 35

Mrs. Fletcher moved and Mr. Mays seconded a motion to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior painting at 1253 Liberty Street. Mr. Johnson motioned and Mr. Lyons seconded to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for fencing at 928 Liberty Street, as presented. It was noted HARB recommended approval of both requests. Both motions passed unanimously.

AWARD FOR DEMOLITION AND SITE RESTORATION – Resolution No. 36

Mrs. Jamieson reported that five bids were received for the CDBG Demolition of Structures and Site Restoration Project - Contract No. 21-A on March 16. She recommended rewarding the project to Bert Klapek Inc. of Oil City, the low bidder, in the amount of \$34,380.00. Mrs. Fletcher moved and Mr. Marshall seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

INTERSECTION SAFETY COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mrs. Jamieson reported that she asked Chief Jim Wetzel to spearhead the Intersection Safety Committee. Mr. Wetzel stated that the committee held a short meeting to discuss the process. He indicated the first task of the committee is to come up with a list of problem areas that can then be prioritized, both for pedestrians and motorists. In order to gain this information, he noted that a survey will be posted on the City's website and the City's Facebook page, which will remain available for a month. He stated that the committee may find that some corrections could be easy fixes, which some problems may require some reconstruction of intersections. If any of the streets in question are under PennDOT's jurisdiction, then the City will have to work with PennDOT to ensure that we comply with their regulations. The public was requested to respond to the survey.

10TH STREET STORM SEWER PROJECT – Resolution No. 37

Mrs. Jamieson proposed that City Council approve entering into an engineering agreement with The EADS Group to replace the storm sewer on 10th Street, from Chestnut to the top of the hill (Elm Street). She explained that the corrugated piping in this section of the street is rotted and could cause the road to cave in underneath it. Since the General Authority would also like to replace the water line in this area, it would be more advantageous to do both projects simultaneously so as to only disturb the roadway one time. The EADS Group estimated the cost of both projects to be \$260,999, \$105,929 of which is associated with the City's proposed project. Also included in the total cost is \$21,900.00 for engineering, bidding and construction consultation fees. If both projects are coordinated at the same time, that amount would be split in half between the General Authority and the City, with the City being responsible for \$10,950.00 of that cost. Mrs. Jamieson explained that this proposal will only be effective if the General Authority moves forward with their portion of the project. If that is the case, we could have it ready for bidding this year or early next year.

Mrs. Fletcher motioned to approve entering into the agreement with The EADS Group. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

VEHICLES FOR AUCTION – Resolution No. 38

Mrs. Jamieson updated Council on the City vehicles to be disposed of via public auction. She stated that the Street Department's new mechanics have had more time to look at the 1 T dump truck that we had initially anticipated would need to be disposed of, and found a used cab that can be installed to extend the life of the truck for another 5 years or so, thus removing that vehicle from the auction process. However, Mrs. Jamieson stated that there are two additional vehicles that she is asking Council's permission to dispose of in the same manner: 2007 Chevy Impala from the Police Dept. stock and a 2008 Ford Explorer, that has recently been used by the Code Enforcement Officer.

Mr. Lyons motioned to approve disposing of the two vehicles through public auction. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PARK AND PARADE ASSEMBLY REQUESTS – Resolution No. 39

Mr. Mays moved to ratify and approve the following requests:

- April 2 • Throughout downtown • Good Friday Cross Walk • First United Methodist
- April 4 • Riverfront Park • Easter Sunrise Service • Christ United Methodist
- June 3-August 26 • Bandstand Park • Thursday Night Concerts • City of Franklin
- August 14 • Fountain Park • Piercy-McLeod Wedding Ceremony • Gregory D. Piercy
- August 28 • Through the bike trail and downtown • Foster 100 Memorial Bike Ride • Team Foster – Matt LaVerde

The motion was seconded by Mr. Johnson, which passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Manager –

- **Resolution No. 40** – Mrs. Jamieson informed the Council that In order to move forward with the Miller-Sibley Recreational Improvements Project, the City is required to sign a declaration stating that it will not convert the use of the property or transfer ownership without written consent of DCNR. Mr. Rudegeair expressed concern about locking us into any type of agreement, however Mrs. Jamieson and Mr. Spaid0 affirmed that we have already been locked into a similar agreement from the Miller and Sibley families when they gifted the property to the City over a hundred years ago. If the City does not agree to these terms, then the DCNR grant offer will be rescinded. Mrs. Fletcher motioned to move forward in approving the declaration. Mr. Lyons seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
- Mrs. Jamieson stated her intentions to reopen City Hall on May 3, 2021, assuming there will not be any huge spikes in Covid cases. The public will still be required to wear face masks until it is no longer recommended.

- Mrs. Jamieson reminded Council that the CARES Act requirement for a 2-week employee sick time benefit had expired on December 30, 2020, but the City agreed to extend that benefit until March 31, 2021. Now that COVID vaccinations are becoming available, Mrs. Jamieson would like offer available time to all employees who may need time off to get their vaccines, or time to recover from any temporary adverse side effects. She asked if Council has any opposition to that policy. No dissenting opinions were received.
- The City is expected to receive approximately \$590,000 in funding from the American Rescue Plan. What the City can use the funds for is still in question, but will be distributed in two separate increments, one this year and one next year, and the funds must be expended by the end of 2024. Once the US Treasury Department issues guidance on how these funds can be spent, Mrs. Jamieson will bring ideas to Council.
- Mrs. Jamieson wanted everyone’s opinion to hold the next council meeting in person in the FICDA Training Room, where there is ample space to socially distance. We would still allow for virtual attendance for anyone not comfortable coming in person. One concern was allowing the public to come in and attend the meeting, but with the virtual option still open, they could call in if they wanted to attend. Majority of the Council members were in favor of returning to in-person meetings.
- Legislative Locator out of the PA Municipal League – Discusses the statuses of legislative issues that could impact local communities, such as local use of radar, stormwater management, government advertising flexibility, Right to Know issues, etc.

Solicitor -- None

Mayor • Appointments – None

COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Baker –

- Mayor Baker read the Arbor Day Proclamation into the record.
- **Resolution No. 41** - Mayor Baker reported that he had served on a committee that worked to update the Venango County 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan. This plan is required to be officially adopted by each municipality in the County to be eligible for any future FEMA or PEMA funds that may come about due to an emergency. Mr. Johnson motioned to adopt the plan. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mrs. Fletcher - None

Mr. Johnson –Reported that he attended the blessing of the new homeless men’s shelter in Oil City and said what a nice and much needed facility it was for the community.

Mr. Lyons – Urged Council to make a decision whether or not to open Miller-Sibley pool. Mr. Mays and Mr. Johnson said it should be opened. Mrs. Jamieson said that, as of her last research a few weeks ago, outdoor amusement venues, such as public pools, were allowed to be opened at 50% occupancy, which shouldn't be a problem for the Miller Sibley Pool. With the majority of Council members indicating its support for reopening the pool this year, plans will be pursued to open this summer.

Mr. Marshall –

Requested that the 15th St. playground get an additional trash can.

He also stated numerous complaints about the garbage in the front yard of 1034 Elk Street. Mrs. Jamieson said the owner is difficult to track down, but Mr. Gibbons is working diligently to resolve the issue.

Inquired about the speed hump for the 1300 block of Otter Street.

Wanted to again raise concerns about cars parked along 15th and Elk, making it difficult for motorists to see when driving through the intersection.

Indicated he has heard numerous complaints about people going to doctor's offices or salons and the customers' parking meters expiring before they could finish their appointments. He wanted to know if there was a way to prevent customers from getting a ticket. Mrs. Jamieson said businesses could purchase any number of hours through the web app on behalf of their customers. All they would need is the license plate numbers of the customers. This is what the City of Warren's business community does.

Mr. Mays – Asked how much longer is the General Authority's sewer project on the Heights expected to continue. Mr. Wetzel said approximately 6 to 8 months.

Mr. Mays asked whose responsibility is the trash on Bredinsburg Hill. Mr. Wetzel said the property is located within Cranberry Township.

Mr. Rudegear – None

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Resolution No. 42

Mrs. Jamieson requested to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of personnel. Mr. Rudegear moved to enter into Executive Session at 7:46pm for the purpose of personnel. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. The Executive Session ended at 8:18 PM.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – Resolution No. 43

Mr. Johnson made the motion to approve a new job description related to grants in the Community Development Department. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which

passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

T.J. Parks,
Recording Secretary