

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
FICDA Training Room
June 7, 2021

Members Present: Douglas Baker, Mayor
Donna Fletcher, Deputy Mayor
James Johnson
Christian Marshall
Fred Mays (via teleconference)
Ryan Rudegear

Members Excused: Samuel Lyons

In Attendance: Tracy Jamieson, City Manager
Brian Spaid, Esq., City Solicitor
Harmony Motter, Finance Director
James Wetzel, Fire Chief
Kevin Anundson, Police Chief (via teleconference)
Charles Gibbons, Code Enforcement Officer (via teleconference)
Michael Gorman, Resource and Development Assistant (via teleconference)
T.J. Parks, Recording Secretary
Dillon Provenza, Venango Newspapers, Inc.
Aly Delp, Explore Venango (via teleconference)
Deb Eckelberger, FICDA
Jodi Lewis, Franklin Rotary Club
Richard and Shirley Emmons, 1447 Liberty Street
Chris Simms, Franklin Moving Forward

The meeting was held virtually and in-person. Mayor Baker called the meeting to order at 7 P.M.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA - Resolution No. 59

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Resolution No. 60

Mrs. Fletcher had noted, via e-mail, that at the previous council meeting held on May 3, 2021, that she had stressed the importance of the Rotary Club keeping the area weeded and well maintained at the Peace Pole in Fountain Park. Mr. Johnson moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 3, 2021. Mr. Rudegear seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PAY THE BILLS - Resolution No. 61

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

CITIZENS' INQUIRIES – None.

CERTIFICATES OF APPROPRIATENESS – Resolution No. 62

It was noted HARB recommended approval of all three of the following requests:

- Replace front porch posts and railings at 1447 Liberty Street,
- Metal copper roofing on porch and gables, and new awnings and porch valance, and sign at 304 W. Park Street,
- Mural painting on the back of the building's exterior at 1253 Liberty Street, as presented.

Mr. Johnson moved, and Mr. Rudegear seconded a motion to issue Certificates of Appropriateness for all three requests. Motion passed unanimously.

FRANKLIN MOVING FORWARD REQUEST – 3rd STREET BOAT LAUNCH & RIVERFRONT – Resolution No. 63

Mr. Chris Simms of Franklin Moving Forward presented photos of proposed locations to install picnic tables at Riverfront Park and the Boat Launch, in addition to the information kiosk at the Boat Launch that they would like to upgrade. Mr. Simms and other Franklin Moving Forward committee members met with Street Dept. Supervisor Jeff Reed to make sure that the desired locations for the picnic tables were satisfactory and away from flood areas. All picnic tables will be placed on cement slabs and bolted to such in order to prevent theft. There will be one table placed at Riverfront Park. At the Boat Launch, the existing picnic table will be replaced. The bench there will also be replaced with a picnic table. At the kiosk, they would like to fix the roof and some errant boards, upgrade the signage, and add city maps provided by the Retail Association and Franklin Chamber. It was asked when they anticipate completing the project. Mr. Simms anticipates by the end of Fall 2021.

Mr. Johnson, motioned to approve Franklin Moving Forward's request, and it was seconded by Mr. Rudegear. The motion passed unanimously, with the exception of Mr. Marshall, who abstained from voting, as he is on the Franklin Moving Forward committee.

MILLER-SIBLEY ENGINEERING CONTRACT AMENDMENT – Resolution No. 64

Mrs. Jamieson announced that DCNR has finally approved the project's plans, and we have now advertised for bids for the project. When the City initially engaged Mr. Amos Rudolph to prepare the drawings and specifications, he did not realize the tedious work involved with getting DCNR approvals. He only charged \$10,000.00 to prepare the plans and specifications. DCNR allows up to 15% of the project cost to be spent towards engineering. On a project with an estimated cost of over \$500,000.00, he certainly could have charged more. Since the grants the City has received should cover the entire cost of the project, and we shouldn't have to spend any money out-of-pocket, Mrs. Jamieson is requesting that the contract with Mr.

Rudolph be increased by \$5,000.00.

Mr. Rudegeair motioned to approve the contract increase. Mrs. Fletcher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

TIMBER SALE AWARD – Resolution No. 65

Mrs. Jamieson presented Council with the result of the first Barrett Flats Timber Sale. The one and only bid received from the May 28 bid opening was from Maple Ridge Forest Products in the amount of \$116,075.00, which is slightly over the lowest threshold recommended by Arnold Forestry for over 200 acres worth of trees. Mrs. Jamieson noted that this is a selective cut, not a clear cut.

Mr. Rudegeair motioned to accept the bid, seconded by Mr. Marshall. Motion passed unanimously.

FIRST READING – Bill No. 2 of 2021 – Resolution No. 66

Mr. Spaid read Bill No. 2, “Vacating and Discontinuing a Part of Fifth Street” in its entirety, into the record. Mr. Spaid also stated that the property owners on both sides will be required to sign 2 separate easement agreements that will allow the City to access any and all utility lines on the property.

Mr. Rudegeair moved and Mr. Johnson seconded the motion to pass on First Reading of Bill No. 2. Motion passed unanimously.

FY-2021 CDBG APPLICATION PROCESS

Mrs. Jamieson announced that the City will receive \$315,030, in Fiscal Year 2021 CDBG funding, which is approximately \$3,200.00 more than the amount received for FY-2020. As the applications for these funds are due by October 28, 2021, the City will begin the process for public hearings and project selections within the next couple of months.

Mrs. Jamieson was also pleased to announce that our new Community Development Director, Amanda Power, spent her first day on the job today and invited Council members to stop by City Hall and introduce themselves.

PARK AND PARADE ASSEMBLY REQUESTS – Resolution No. 67

Mrs. Fletcher moved and Mr. Rudegeair seconded the motion to approve the following requests:

- June 14 through August 27 - 3rd Street Playground, Atlantic Avenue Playground, Buffalo Street Playground • Summer Food Service Program Daily Meal Distribution • Venango Co. CYFS
- June 29 - Bandstand Park • 100th Anniversary Celebration • Franklin Rotary Club
- September 11 – Bandstand Park • Pet Fest • Precious Paws
- October 2 – Along Liberty Street, from 13th Street to 3rd Street • Applefest 5k • Franklin

YMCA

The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Manager –

No Parking Ordinance on 15th Street – Mrs. Jamieson noted that there was no formal ordinance in the packets regarding Mr. Marshall’s request for parking near the intersection of 15th and Elk Streets. Upon reviewing the matter with staff, it was decided that a “No Parking Here to Corner” sign should suffice. Mr. Marshall noticed that since the sign was installed, he has not noticed any issues, so we can forgo the formal ordinance.

Public Vehicle Auction - We received the results of the May 8, 2021 public vehicle auction, held by 422 Auto Sales. The 3 vehicles auctioned off generated \$5,572.50 for the City.

Miller-Sibley Renovation Project - We are finally able to go out for bid on the Miller-Sibley Park Renovations project. The bid opening will be Tuesday, June 29 at 10am. We anticipate presenting the bid results at the July 12th Council meeting.

Downtown Lights and Bricks Replacement Project - Bids are being received by PennDOT until June 24th on this project. PennDOT will share the bid results and request that the City approve the contract. If all goes as planned, a Notice to Proceed to the successful bidder will be issued 12 weeks after contract award. The concrete portion of the project will not start until after Applefest and the project should finish by next spring with the lighting.

Blight Remediation Grant – The City was awarded \$129,000.00 to aid in blight remediation within the City. We hope to be able to remove ten (10) blighted structures. Mrs. Jamieson indicated that the City will probably have to take ownership of the structures before tearing them down. The City can then sell the vacant lots at a public sale. She noted that Sheila Boughner had worked very hard on this grant application.

American Rescue Plan – Resolution No. 68 – The City will be receiving \$314,687.99 this year, and the same amount in 2022, from the latest stimulus bill (American Rescue Plan) from Washington, DC. These funds have very strict, albeit unclear, guidelines as to how they can be spent. However, the law requires that the funds be disseminated within 30 days of receiving them, so DCED is urging municipalities to apply. Mrs. Jamieson contacted DCED to ask, if we don’t know what our exact intentions are, could we apply now and make adjustments later. It is encouraged that that is exactly what we do. Mrs. Jamieson recommended Council approve the first batch of funds be applied for as follows:

- \$88,000 – Replace lost public sector revenue
- \$150,000 – Investment in public facilities ventilation systems
- \$76,688 – Investments in technology infrastructure

Having said that, Mrs. Jamieson noted that she, and other City staff, recently met with Amos Rudolph, and toured City facilities to see what improvements may be needed to the buildings. Depending on the results of that study, we may be able to utilize some of the ARP funds towards the necessary improvements if they fit within the allowable uses of the ARP funds.

Mr. Rudegear motioned, and Mrs. Fletcher seconded to approve submitting an application for funds with these tentative suggestions. Motion passed unanimously.

Sidewalk Replacement Project – Resolution No. 69 – The project involving the sidewalks being replaced along Franklin Ave., the 1200, 1300, and 1400 blocks of Otter St., and a small portion on 14th St., is going well. After the entire project is completed, the Street Department will street sweep those areas and reinstall the speed hump in the 1300 block of Otter St. The Franklin Library asked if the City could replace some broken sidewalk on 12th St. where the old oak tree was removed. Upon review, Mrs. Jamieson and Mr. Reed decided that some sidewalk along Buffalo St. is also in need of repair. Mrs. Jamieson asked Council to approve replacing these areas of sidewalk. To do the entire stretch of sidewalk along both the 12th Street side and the Buffalo Street side, the cost would be \$13,981.00. To do only the worst parts of sidewalk would cost \$8,678.00. Since this portion of sidewalk was not part of the CDBG application, it cannot be paid for with CDBG funds; it will have to be paid out of the City's capital budget. Discussion was held on whether the City should use the services of the sidewalk contractor (GEM Contracting) while they are still in town to replace some of the sidewalks at the library.

Mrs. Fletcher motioned, and Mr. Rudegear seconded, to repair the entire stretch of sidewalk at a cost of \$13,981.00, paid for out of the City's capital budget. Motion passed unanimously, with the exception of Mr. Johnson, who abstained, as he is on the Library Board.

Intersection Safety Committee Update – Fire Chief Jim Wetzel reported that the committee intends to hold their first meeting next week. He said that approximately 2/3 of the responses came from City residents, some of whom had brought areas of concern that we hadn't previously considered.

Future Council Meetings – Resolution No. 70 – Mrs. Jamieson asked Council if they would prefer to continue holding Council meetings in the FICDA Training Room, or return to Council Chambers, since it seems that the COVID regulations are relaxing. Mr. Rudegear motioned and Mrs. Fletcher seconded to return to Council Chambers. Motion passed unanimously.

Solicitor – Mr. Spaid wanted to inform everyone that the high school football game between Oil City and Franklin next year will be held on Friday of Applefest weekend, so traffic is expected to be hectic.

Mayor Appointments – None

COUNCIL REPORTS

Mayor Baker - None

Mrs. Fletcher –

- Commented on the nice editorial in the newspaper by out-of-towners and their gracious compliments of our community.
- Asked about the Extreme Audio location on 13th Street and asked what can be done about abandoned vehicles. It was noted that the parcel is actually located in Sugarcreek Borough and she asked Mr. Spaid to bring it to their attention.
- Reported continuous complaints by a neighbor of 838 Elk Street. The young guy that lives at this rental property gets home from the bar after closing and vomits profusely. Neighbors are finding this very disruptive and wonder what can be done. Mr. Spaid recommended calling the police, as long as the witness is willing to testify.

Mr. Johnson –

- Thought the Memorial Day Parade and celebration at Bandstand Park were a great success.

Mr. Marshall –

- Thanked Mrs. Jamieson and the Street Department for the “No Parking Here to Corner” sign at 15th St.
- He asked if a digital speed check sign on 15th Street hill is going to be moved coming down the hill, from its current location that exists as you go uphill. Mrs. Jamieson stated that as soon as they can figure out a location to fasten it so it won’t get stolen, she would like to see the radar moved to another place.
- Met the new police officer, Adam Steiner, and is pleased to see that position filled.
- Asked Police Chief Anundson about new laptops. Mr. Anundson reported that they have not been able to use them yet, because some of the components for the dashboard mounts come from China and that they are behind in shipping.

Mr. Mays – None

Mr. Rudegear –

- Requested time in Executive Session for matters of personnel.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – Resolution No. 71 – Mr. Rudegear moved and Mr. Johnson seconded to enter into Executive Session for the purposes of personnel at 7:43 P.M. The motion passed unanimously. Executive Session concluded at 8:05 P.M.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS –

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

T.J. Parks,
Recording Secretary