

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 10, 2020

The regular meeting of the Council for the City of Covington was held electronically on Tuesday, November 10, 2020, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 333 W. Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thomas H. Sibold, Jr. The invocation was given by Rev. Bill Gilliland. Because members were participating via Zoom, Mayor Sibold dispensed of the Pledge of Allegiance but reminded the audience that tomorrow is Veterans' Day and announced that the local Veterans of Foreign Wars will hold a ceremony at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday.

Roll Call of Council showed all members present electronically as follows: Mayor Sibold, Vice Mayor David S. Crosier, Councilman Edmond J. (Eddie Joe) Entsminger, Councilman Raymond C. Hunter and Councilman S. Allan Tucker. Councilman-elect W.E. (Lance) Carson, Jr. was also present.

City Manager: Krystal Onaitis
City Attorney: Mark Popovich

As the meeting was conducted electronically via Zoom, Mayor Thomas Sibold read a statement declaring that due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus health emergency and pursuant to Chapter 1283 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, Council would convene electronically for this meeting to transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue the operations of the City.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon a motion by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted by consent to approve the agenda as presented.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

City Clerk Rebecca Scott read an email and photo that had been forwarded to Council members on November 8, 2020, from Julie Lawson of Royal Avenue concerning overflowing recycling bins behind Casey Field. Mayor Sibold stated that Public Works employees had cleaned up the debris early Monday morning. Two new bins are being fabricated and will be installed soon.

Mrs. Scott also read a letter from Deloris Quarles, a member of the Commission of Racial Equality, who highlighted the accomplishments of the group in proactively advancing equality and racial justice in local governments, policies, and education services. Ms. Quarles encouraged the public to join the group meeting via Zoom at the Alleghany Government Complex on November 19, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. Mayor Sibold and Councilman Hunter expressed interest in participating.

CORRECTION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted to approve the following minutes as presented: Called Meeting of October 6, 2020; Work Session of October 6, 2020; and the Regular Meeting of October 13, 2020.

APPOINTMENTS

An appointment was made to the Alleghany Highlands Community Services Board. After a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier that was seconded by Mr. Hunter, Council voted by consensus to appoint Stephanie Clark to replace Lisa Hicks, who has served three consecutive terms and is ineligible to be reappointed.

Council also agreed by consensus to reappoint Councilman Hunter to the League of Older Americans Advisory Board on a motion by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker.

REPORT OF THE CITY MANAGER

1. Recycling: Ms. Onaitis noted that the bins are emptied on Mondays and Thursdays weekly. Leaving items outside the bins can constitute illegal dumping.
2. The number of COVID-19 cases is still rising in the area. According to the Alleghany Health District statistics, there are 56 active cases in Covington and 180 cases in Alleghany County. Ms. Onaitis asked Council for a consensus on continuing keeping City Hall closed with administrative employees working virtually, adjusting schedules, and using skeleton crews; and Council members agreed.
3. CARES Act Funding: Currently \$143,889.00 has been spent, with \$738,089.00 in projected spending. This does not include hazard duty pay or pay for quarantined employees or COVID cases.
4. Streets and Paving: Carpenter Drive paving has been completed, and projects have begun on Mallow Road and Edgemont Drive. Of the \$3 million allocated, \$990,255.36 has already been spent, which does not include paving and the guardrail on Mallow Road. Notices have been sent for the work on Mallow and Edgemont. She and Mr. Popovich are working with the State Corporation Commission on an emergency order to expedite work and dispense normal procedures required to move gas lines on Edgemont Drive. The motion was filed today, and Mr. Popovich anticipates a final execution order should arrive by Thursday morning.
5. Department of Environmental Quality Consent Order: Proposals have been received, and Ms. Onaitis and Mr. Popovich are working on the RFP order and plan to award the contract before Thanksgiving.
6. Economic Development: She and Olde Towne Covington representatives are collaborating on the Main Street Revitalization Grant, with contracts awarded recently. Work continues with the

Allegheny Foundation and Allegheny Highlands Economic Development Corporation concerning potential economic impact that may occur with the Rayon Bridge closing. She continues to work with the VDOT district office on various funding sources for the bridge repair.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

For Resolution R-20-35 regarding CARES Act funding for Covington City Schools for \$457,147.97, a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve. Motion carried 5 to 0: Mayor Sibold, For; Vice Mayor Crosier, For; Mr. Entsminger, For; Mr. Hunter, For; Mr. Tucker, For.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Sibold noted that there was some confusion about the special election held last Tuesday, November 3, to fill the unexpired term of the late C.J. Entsminger. Attorney Popovich clarified that as soon as the registrar has certified the election and Mr. Carson is sworn in, he will take office. Mayor Sibold thanked Councilman Entsminger and commended his eagerness, candor, and desire to serve.

With no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned on a move from Vice Mayor Crosier and seconded by Mr. Tucker.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca W. Scott
City Clerk