

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 9, 2022

The regular meeting of the Council for the City of Covington was held on Tuesday, August 9, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at Council Chambers in City Hall, 333 W. Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thomas H. Sibold, Jr. The invocation was given by Reverend Roy Carter, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call of Council showed all members present as follows: Mayor Sibold, Vice Mayor David S. Crosier, Councilman William E. Carson, Jr., Councilman Raymond C. Hunter, and Councilman S. Allan Tucker.
City Manager: Krystal Onaitis City Attorney: Mark Popovich

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There was discussion to change the order of the meeting for Ms. Fridley and Dr. Linkenhoker to speak near the beginning of the meeting. Motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier and seconded by Mr. Tucker to make this change, all members agreed by consent.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Adrienne Fridley of South Alleghany Avenue spoke that Route 220 is residential, she has four children that walk and play, speed limit is an issue and there needs to be children at play signs near Covington Tire. The alley up from Lucas Pizzeria is in bad shape with vines growing up poles and power lines. The alley is in rough shape and can damage vehicles. Some residents have to drive the alley to get to their homes, there are no other entrances. Ms. Fridley also mentioned that doctor offices and such are fine in the area however there is a need for other activities for kids. The Celebration Station event center downtown stays very busy with events and cannot open for the public to come by for example like a Chucky Cheese. There are no activities for disabled kids, they cannot float down the river or be in a crowded bowling alley like other kids. There needs to be more to pull people in from other areas to come to Uniquely Alleghany. She thanked Council for their time and considering her requests.

Greg Rice spoke about dilapidated property across from Oak where rats are coming out of the property. There are children playing and when the animals come out of the homes it frightens the kids. It does not help to board up properties, they are caving in. He has purchased rat poison and does not believe he should have to do that.

CORRECTION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council consented to approve the following minutes as presented: Regular Meeting on July 12, 2022 and Called meeting on July 19, 2022.

NEW BUSINESS

Paul Linkenhoker spoke that the Discover Center will be open during Street Scene on Saturday, August 13, 2022 and that everyone could come to view the center, it has hands on activities for children and adults. Dr. Linkenhoker spoke about the Honor of Banners throughout the area. These banners honor those that have served in the military for our country. There have been 46 banners hung so far. There are 19 more waiting to be put up, 15 being processed, 9 more applications and 2 others have recently contacted him which is a total of 88 banners. Some applicants have requested specific streets. Dr. Linkenhoker thanked Thomas Smals for coordinating and having the banners hung correctly with the contractor. He asked Council to continue support of the program. The Olde Town Covington banners where hung prior and now the honor banners are filling in nicely. Monroe Avenue does not have enough poles and they are looking to add banners to Alleghany Avenue, Craig Avenue and Durant Road, the main corridors. He has purchased sign permits for 100 banners.

Ms. Onaitis asked Council if there is a consensus to fill Monroe and then move to Alleghany Avenue and that there may be a safety issue with having the street blocked for an entire day. Dr. Linkenhoker noted that Monroe looks full and there is no doubt that all corridors will be filled. He understands that traffic needs to flow. Allen Dressler noted that when banners are hung it is a seamless process. Councilman Carson stated that he would like Dry Run to receive banners, which is in his district that it has been top class work. Mayor Sibold stated there was a consensus of Council to move forward with the hanging of the banners.

REPORT OF THE CITY MANAGER

Ms. Onaitis reported in reference to the Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Corporation-AHEDC having a ground field grant and have solicited for the City and County. She and Reid Walters, Alleghany County Administrator plan to attend a conference in regard to the grant.

The developer for the former Gordman's building is moving for purchase of the property. There will be 17 units renovated in the former Peoples Bank building on the corner of West Main and North Maple Avenue. The site in Low Moor, VA, referred to as the Pad Site, have bids advertised and are due back on August 20, 2022. This economic development project is joint with the City and Alleghany County. The Rayon Bridge proposed replacement design is expected to be received soon. The City will present in October in reference to the bridge to VDOT. There is only one other presenter from another locality presenting. There was low response to the Maple Avenue phase 3 project bid, this will be rebid. There has been low response for small jobs in the state. There have been meetings in reference to the overcrowding with Alleghany Regional Jail and Rockbridge County jail system.

Ms. Onaitis asked Department Heads to report:

David Bryant, Finance Director, gave a quarterly budget report summary. It is projected that revenue will exceed the expenditures. Mr. Bryant reported that the 4th quarter revenues have maintained a steady pace compared to last year. He gave a summary of expenditures, utility fund and solid waste fund. He will continue to give the quarterly presentation; noted that supplies continue to rise in cost; there will be monitoring of cost impacts in budgets and the supply chain impacts can impact revenue and projections.

Patrick Madigan, Director of Public Works, gave a paving report that the bids that were advertised were for slurry and mill/overlay and prices came in a lot higher than expected. They are considering doing two different bids. One of the companies are not available to pave until next season. He reviewed the Timmons report on paving that gives Covington streets an average grade of 86%. There are different applications for paving such as the fog/seal onyx that will extend paving 3-5 years. Ms. Onaitis stated that inflation in material costs are being moved to the customer. Mr. Madigan thanked Council for the appropriation of \$175,000 for paving.

Allen Dressler, Director of Parks & Recreation gave a report on assisting with the cutting of the City's overgrown areas due to rainy season and staffing issues. He reported that the Cedar Hill Cemetery is in great shape thanks to Russell Carson and employees that have been doing a tremendous job. Also the flower baskets in the City are being well taken care of by Kevin Pettitt and staff. The staff have done a wonderful job on the parks events. Mr. Dressler has worked with Patrick Madigan and Bob Howard, Director of Operations for Public Works to have trees, grounds and grass worked. He has received compliments that Maple Avenue and Monroe Street underpass, have been cut. There have been many areas worked thanks to staff and contracted assistance. Due to lack of manpower, the employees on the refuse trucks are reporting back the status of alleys while collecting refuse. He appreciates everyone working together and also getting ready for Street Scene this weekend.

Mr. Dressler was thanked for the work by Council. Vice Mayor Crosier asked that the 2000 block of York be worked and the corner of Parrish & Carpenter for a low tree that is hitting cars. Councilman Hunter asked that the alley behind Pine Street Baptist Church be worked. Ms. Onaitis noted that property owners need to do some cutting if growth from their property is going over into the alley. That it could be posted and if not cut they will be billed. He asked what the contractors do with the paving/milling that is taken up. Ms. Onaitis stated that contractors usually recycle it. Councilman Hunter thanked Mr. Dressler for the tree work done on Alleghany Avenue. Councilman Carson noted that during the Relay for Life event the fields at the Sport Complex were beautiful and music nice. A ball event was canceled in Roanoke because of rain and his grandchild came to play after they asked Covington to use the field and it was accommodated. The citizens told Mr. Carson they would rather come to Covington with their kids, that it is such a nice field and area.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Mike Jefferies, Senior Project Manager, Thompson & Litton gave a status report that due to supply chain issues the contractor for the WWTP EQ basin project is having difficulty getting supplies for the project. The EQ tank is available however the pipe that goes under the tank is not available. Suppliers are working as much as possible and cannot keep up with demand, estimated delivery is 48 weeks. They are trying to come up with creative ways. The project completion date is July 2023, the City sent a letter to request an extension on this project.

APPOINTMENTS

On a motion by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Hunter, Renita Jeter was appointed to the open seat for the Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The vote showed: Mayor Sibold: For Vice Mayor Crosier: For; Mr. Carson: For; Mr. Hunter: For; and Mr. Tucker: For.

UNFINISHED/OLD BUSINESS

On a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution R-22-23, Amending appropriations for FY beginning July 1, 2022 and ending June 30, 2023; vote showed Mayor Sibold: For; Vice Mayor Crosier: For; Mr. Carson: For; Mr. Hunter: For; and Mr. Tucker: For.

On a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution R-22-24, Opioid settlement recoveries, \$4,066.35; vote showed Mayor Sibold: For; Vice Mayor Crosier: For; Mr. Carson: For; Mr. Hunter: For; and Mr. Tucker: For.

On a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution R-22-25, regarding state and local fiscal recovery funds \$3,410,730.00; vote showed Mayor Sibold: For; Vice Mayor Crosier: For; Mr. Carson: For; Mr. Hunter: For; and Mr. Tucker: For.

Council discussed that Chapter 46, utility code, needs updated. Mr. Popovich was asked to review and give Council some problem areas, he agreed to do review and get this back to Council. Item was tabled.

On a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted unanimously to approve, City Council bylaws and rules of procedure-revisions to bylaws provided by City Attorney; vote showed Mayor Sibold: For; Vice Mayor Crosier: For; Mr. Carson: For; Mr. Hunter: For; and Mr. Tucker: For.

On a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted unanimously to approve, Finance Committee Bylaws; vote showed Mayor Sibold: For; Vice Mayor Crosier: For; Mr. Carson: For; Mr. Hunter: For; and Mr. Tucker: For.

Council discussed that there needs to be an advertisement for a Public Hearing regarding the keeping of urban chickens in the City of Covington.

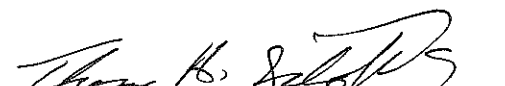
PROCLAMATIONS

Mayor Sibold noted that National Day of Clogging was in August. The Building and Code Staff Appreciation Day is September 1st.

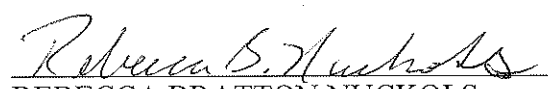
NEW BUSINESS

Council discussed the Deed of Ground Lease regarding Alleghany Highlands Public Schools. This lease is in reference to the former school board office building on Walnut Street and if approved it could be leased back to the County.

Motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier and seconded by Mr. Tucker to move into closed session to discuss the Peters Mountain landfill. All members agreed by consent. Council moved into closed session.


THOMAS H. SIBOLD, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:


REBECCA BRATTON NUCKOLS
INTERIM CITY CLERK