

September 13, 2022

MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2022

A regular meeting of the Council for the City of Covington was held on Tuesday, September 13, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 333 W. Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thomas H. Sibold, Jr. All members were present including Mayor Sibold, Vice Mayor David S. Crosier, Council member William E. Carson, Jr., Council member Raymond C. Hunter, and Council member S. Allan Tucker. Also present were Interim City Manager, Allen Dressler and City Attorney Mark Popovich.

The invocation was given by Pastor Stephanie Clark, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Mayor Crosier made a motion to approve the agenda with the following items added: to discuss compensation of the Interim City Manager and to consider the proposed chicken ordinance. He also made a motion to enter into closed session under Virginia code section 2.2-3711 (a) (3) to consider city owned real estate. Mr. Carson seconded the motion. All members were in favor with an "aye" vote.

Public Hearing

Ms. Megan Mann, no address provided, spoke in favor of the amended chicken ordinance stating that having chickens would provide eggs for families to eat and help teach children the responsibility in caring for an animal. She said that the proposed ordinance presented by Council did a good job of allowing individuals to have chickens, while having protections put in place to keep them from becoming a nuisance. Ms. Mann said she hopes Council will approve the ordinance to allow chickens within the city limits.

Ms. Audrey Bess, 605 West Main Street, spoke in favor of the proposed ordinance. She stated that her only caveat was the limit of four chickens was too restrictive and suggested to Council to increase the amount to eight, or even 12 chickens. She advised that chickens lay their eggs once a day, and only make noise up to 70 decibels, which is quieter than a dog barking. She questioned what Council would do if someone wound up with a rooster by mistake, as it is difficult to determine the sex of young chicks.

Mrs. Stephanie Clark, 804 South Alleghany Avenue, advised she wasn't sure if she was for or against the proposed ordinance. She spoke about the abundance of chickens on Jackson Street years ago, and the neighbors having issues with said chickens. She recommended a limit on the number of chickens allowed. Council advised Mrs. Clark that the ordinance stated only four chickens are allowed per residence.

Mayor Sibold advised that the ordinance is pretty restrictive regarding number of chickens, size of the pen, and distance from a neighbor's house. He also said that a permit is required in order to own chickens, which has to be renewed on an annual basis.

Mr. Carson advised that his son had purchased six chickens for his grandson. The chickens drew a bear in within a month. The bear killed half the chickens, and Mr. Carson's son had to get rid of the rest of the chickens so the bear wouldn't return. He said the bear started getting into the trashcans in the neighborhood, which created a big mess. His main concern is what kind of wild animals will chickens draw into the city, and what will the consequences be?

Mrs. Eunice Clark questioned whether there were any roosters allowed. Council assured her there were no roosters allowed.

Mayor Sibold closed the public hearing.

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#### Citizen Comments

Mrs. Eunice Clark spoke about Senator Warner and his comments regarding chip manufacturing plants. She said that Covington should come up with letters and a campaign to Senator Warren and Senator Kaine regarding having a chip plant in Covington to create jobs in the area, which will hopefully draw in residents. Mayor Sibold advised he'd speak with the Economic Development Association and the Industrial Development Authority regarding this subject.

#### Correction and Approval of Minutes

August 9, 2022-Regular Meeting

August 23, 2022-Called Meeting

Vice Mayor Crosier moved for approval of both. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

#### Appointments

Vice Mayor Crosier made a motion for Orlando "Buddha" Clark to replace Wes Walker on the Board of Zoning Appeals. Mr. Carson seconded the motion. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

Vice Mayor Crosier made a motion for Cynthia Scully to replace Max Shawver on the Planning Commission. Mr. Carson seconded the motion. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

#### Resolutions

R-22-26-Upon a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted to approve Resolution R-22-26 regarding an annual application for the Covington Division of Police for the Walmart Community Grant (children shopping with police officers). All Councilmembers were in favor with "aye" votes.

R-22-27-Upon a motion from Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted to approve Resolution R-22-27 authorizing the application to the Covington Division of Police for the PSAP Education Program Grant for dispatcher training. All Councilmembers were in favor with "aye" votes.

#### Ordinances

O-22-05-Vice Mayor Crosier moved to approve Ordinance O-22-05 if the ordinance regarding owning chickens in Covington City was left as is and reevaluated in six months. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion. The rollcall votes of Councilmembers were as follows: Mr. Carson-against; Mr. Hunter-against; Mr. Tucker-for; Vice Mayor Crosier-for; Mayor Sibold-for.

#### New Business

##### Compensation for Interim City Manager

Vice Mayor Crosier moved to allow the City Attorney and the Mayor to conduct negotiations with Mr. Allen Dressler, Interim City Manager, to work out a viable compensation plan. Mr. Hunter seconded the motion. All Councilmembers were in favor with "aye" votes.

##### Interim City Manager's Report

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Interim City Manager Allen Dressler started off by saying he is about the city, citizens, and employees. He stated that the city was getting caught up with the hiring process and proceeded to thank Patrick Madigan (former city employee), Dink Bogar (Public Works Department), Bob Howard (Public Works Department), and David Bryant (Finance Director), for following through on interviews and getting people employed. He went on to say that the new employees that have joined the city over the last week and a half are young and vibrant, and that it was a good thing they returned the next day.

Mr. Dressler commended Gisela Roldan, Citizen Services employee, for a job well done in the Treasurer's office for two weeks when the employees were on vacation and out sick. He thanked Mrs. Roldan for doing such a great job on behalf of the city.

East Main Street (walk thru underneath the railroad tracks)-The underpass has been power washed, repainted, and had brush removed. He said he thinks the citizens will be pleased with the outcome.

He stated that he and Mr. Bryant had met with Beverly Twitty and Eric Mack regarding issues on Hunter's Hill and Lincoln Avenue. He listened to their concerns and said it was a good visit.

Mr. Dressler encouraged citizens to make contact with the city at City Hall through the City Manager's office. He said that their concerns would be entertained and if he needs to go out, he will. He advised that he had a good walk through on behalf of the city to identify neighbors' concerns and that the city would be addressing some of those as quickly as possible.

The Public Works Department has been moved from the Nettleton property back to Maple Avenue. There are still a few things that need to be addressed regarding insurance and the garage roof, but he is glad to get our people back up there where there is more space. The city will work to get the buildings removed from the Nettleton property. We will move forward with the traffic study as we look at possibly moving Public Works to the Nettleton property, depending upon traffic with the middle school in the upcoming years.

Rayon Bridge-There will be an annual Rayon Bridge inspection at which time we will be given some direction on the deck, concrete, etc. to ensure we have a bridge until it is replaced next year.

The sidewalk (shoulder) on Edgemont Drive has been repaired.

City Hall Building-Chief Smith and Thomas Smals have been working on security at City Hall in order to try to get our citizens back into the entire building safely. Mr. Dressler stated he appreciates Chief Smith's and Mr. Smals' efforts with this project. He said he appreciates the public's patience while they are working on this.

Fall Cleanup-Mr. Dressler advised citizens that Fall Cleanup will be from September 26 through September 29 for the east side of the railroad tracks and from October 3 through October 7 for the west side of the tracks.

Mr. Dressler went on to thank City Clerk Kyla Crosier for taking the time to sit down and discuss the agenda with him. He said it was very nice and he appreciates her time.

He congratulated Michael Mines, city employee, on his new baby daughter.

He stated that Mr. Bryant has done a good job, and he appreciates the opportunity to work with him and solve some issues.

Mr. Dressler advised that he'd met with Jerry Clark (Allegheny Journal), Chuck Unroe (Clifton Forge), Chad Williams (Allegheny County), and Robin Bruins (Regional Commission) to devise an outdoor plan for the Allegheny Highlands. He said they need citizen input, and there is a survey for citizens to respond to. He said they are working together and that recreation had been a highlight in the Allegheny Highlands for years, particularly

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regarding our children. He is looking forward to all the things they are hoping to get accomplished regarding recreation.

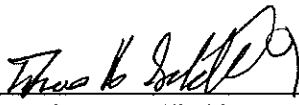
Mr. Dressler said there were 135 campers at the AET Sports Complex over the past weekend for various activities such as girls' fast pitch, adult slow pitch, and a Colt reunion that was taken care of by the Cougars. He said the city is working hard for the betterment of the Alleghany Highlands.

Vice Mayor Crosier inquired about the sidewalk repair near the entrance to Walmart. Mr. Dressler stated that it would be completed by the end of October, weather permitting. He went on to say they were hoping to address some paving issues at the Walmart entrance as well once the sidewalk was completed.

Mr. Hunter inquired about some painting that had been done at the Chestnut Street underpass. He said that one square had been painted, and he'd like to see the rest painted as well. Mr. Dressler said he'd follow up the next morning.

Vice Mayor Crosier made a motion to enter into closed session under Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (a) (3) to discuss city owned real estate. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion. All Councilmember were in favor with "aye" votes.

With no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned.

  
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Mayor Thomas H. Sibold, Jr.

Attest:  
  
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Kyla D. Crosier, City Clerk