

November 8, 2022

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2022**

A regular meeting for the Council of the City of Covington was held on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 333 West Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

Mayor Thomas H. Sibold called the meeting to order with the following members present: Mayor Sibold; Vice Mayor David S. Crosier; Councilman William E. (Lance) Carson, Jr.; Councilman Raymond C. Hunter; and Councilman S. Allan Tucker. Also present were Interim City Manager Allen Dressler and City Attorney, Mark Popovich.

The invocation was given by Pastor Bill Gilliland followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice Mayor Crosier made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of a closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (a) (1) of the code of Virginia to discuss Council appointed personnel. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments

Appointments

- 1) Board of Zoning Appeals-to fill expired term of Harrison Scott
- 2) Total Action Against Poverty-Mr. Crosier motioned to appoint Mayor Sibold to the TAP Board. Mr. Tucker seconded the motion. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.
- 3) Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Regional Commission-Mr. Crosier motioned to appoint Mr. Dressler to the RVARC, seconded by Mr. Tucker. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.
- 4) League of Older Americans-Mr. Crosier moved to reappoint Mr. Hunter to the LOA, seconded by Mr. Tucker. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.
- 5) Alleghany Highlands Community Services Board-Mr. Crosier moved to reappoint Robert (Bob) McCallister to the CSB, seconded by Mr. Tucker. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.
- 6) Alleghany Highlands Community Services Board-Mr. Crosier moved to appoint Lisa Hicks to the CSB, seconded by Mr. Tucker. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

Special Presentation

Covington Fire Department-Fire Chief Andrew Baker-Mr. Baker thanked Council for approving money in this year's budget for new equipment for the Covington Fire Department. He presented the new air packs and air compressors to Council. He said that the air off of the new ladder truck can be used for an extended period of time, the air packs are more ergonomic due to the back swiveling. He explained that the Rapid Intervention Team the RiT pack to help a downed firefighter. Mr. Baker said that the cost of the new equipment was 400,000 dollars, and was much appreciated.

Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting-October 11, 2022-Mr. Crosier moved for approval, seconded by Mr. Tucker. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

Resolutions

- 1) R-22-33-Opioid Settlement-Mr. Crosier moved for approval, seconded by Mr. Tucker. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Mr. Tucker, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

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2) R-22-34-Sidewalk Grant (Pine Street to Beech Street) Mr. Crosier moved for approval, seconded by Mr. Tucker. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Mr. Tucker, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

3) R-22-35-Local Emergency Management Performance Grant-Mr. Crosier moved for approval, seconded by Mr. Tucker. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Mr. Tucker, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

4) R-22-36 -VRSA Insurance Program-Mr. Crosier moved for approval, seconded by Mr. Tucker. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Mr. Tucker, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

5) R-22-37-Social Services Employee Bonuses-Mr. Crosier moved for approval, seconded by Mr. Tucker. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Mr. Tucker, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

City Manager's Report

Paving on Thacker Avenue

Mr. Dressler stated that the paving on Thacker Avenue will be done tomorrow and Thursday. All other paving will be moved until spring.

Maple Avenue Phase 3

Phase 3 of the Maple Avenue Project will begin the first of the year.

Mr. Dressler said there was a fantastic gathering at Pumpkins in the Park and the trunk or treat held by Cars Unlimited. There were a few thousand people that attended Hometown Halloween.

He advised that outdoor recreation is shutting down for the winter and focus would be on leaf pick-up, pothole patching, and holiday decorations.

Roof repair is underway at the public works garage that was damaged by a storm over the summer.

Nettleton Property

Public works is in the process of cleaning up the Nettleton Property. The blue tarp will be removed once clean-up is complete.

EQ Basin Project

The project continues, but there are issues purchasing products.

Boodie Albert Stadium

A grant was given to the Alleghany Foundation for Boodie Albert Stadium. They are in phase 2 of the feasibility study, 35 percent into the design.

Columbia Gas

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Columbia Gas will be doing a lot of work over the next three years, starting at Edgemont on November 14, 2022.

Veteran Banners

Mr. Dressler thanked Paul Linkenhoker, Thomas Smals, and local contractors for putting up 60 more banners for our veterans around the city. He said that there will be a celebration at the Covington Farmer's Market.

Upcoming Activities

Santa Run-November 27, 2022-2:00 p.m.-AET Sports Complex

Christmas Tree Lighting/Cookies with Santa-November 27, 2022-6:00 p.m.-Covington City Hall

Gingerbread Workshop-December 9, 2022-6:00 p.m.-Jeter Watson Center

Mr. Dressler advised to please keep hunters in mind this time of year and to be careful.

He wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

Mayor Sibold thanked Mr. Dressler for his communications with Columbia Gas and contractors.

New Business

Department of Social Services

Betty McCulley, Assistant Director of Social Services, asked Council to consider a resolution approving bonuses for employees of the Department of Social Services. As Chairman of the DSS Board, Mr. Crosier explained to Council the bonus would be distributed to employees once at the end of November. Upon a motion from Mr. Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Mr. Tucker, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

Alleghany Highlands Community Services Board

Lydia Hall, jail diversion supervisor, and Shawn Moran, assistant to Ms. Gardiner, updated Council on the drug court. Ms. Hall explained that it was very difficult to start a drug court in the middle of a pandemic. She said the treatment for patients was voluntary and very aggressive, and that each patient is in a different phase of treatment. Mayor Sibold advised it sounded as if the program was working the way it was intended. Mr. Moran advised the drug court would make a positive impact on the drug epidemic, and that Botetourt County has started a drug court as well. Mayor Sibold thanked them for the update.

Proclamation-Extra Mile Day

Mayor Sibold signed the proclamation declaring November 1, 2022 as "Extra Mile Day" in the City of Covington.

Personnel Update

Mr. Popovich discussed the updated personnel policy with Council, stating that the former City Manager had instructed him to look at all city policies. He directed Council to section 3.6, second paragraph, regarding a cost of living adjustment for city employees. He advised Council that by reviewing the cost of living adjustment each year, it would help the city retain personnel and not lose their employees to other locations due to higher pay.

Section 312-Longevity Pay-Mr. Popovich spoke regarding longevity pay for city employees. Mr. Hunter questioned who would receive the pay. Mr. Popovich advised that employees that had been with the city 4 years or less probably would not receive longevity pay. The pay will top out at 1,000 dollars. He and Council discussed whether

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or not Constitutional officers would be included in the longevity pay. Council advised they would discuss and make a decision.

Mayor Sibold stated that the section pertaining to substance abuse needs to be more specific, such as what kind of substance abuse, on or off the job? Council will discuss this further.

Mr. Crosier stated his concern regarding city employees having second jobs and not making the policy too restrictive due to some people needing another job for additional income. Mr. Popovich explained that the employee needed supervisor approval before starting a second job.

New Business

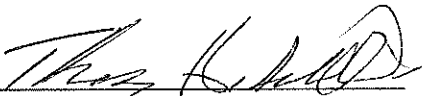
Mayor Sibold stated that Hometown Halloween, sponsored by Oldetown Covington, was a very successful event. He reminded citizens of the Christmas parade and other events coming up on the first Saturday of December.

Closed Session

Vice Mayor Crosier made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (a) (1) of the code of Virginia to discuss Council appointed personnel. Mr. Tucker seconded, and all members were in favor with "aye" votes.

Following the closed session, Mr. Crosier made a motion to appoint Allen Dressler as the manager for the City of Covington, seconded by Mr. Tucker. The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Mr. Tucker, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

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


Thomas H. Sibold, Jr., Mayor

Attest:


Kyla D. Crosier, City Clerk