

July 11, 2023

**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
JULY 11, 2023**

The Council for the City of Covington held a regular meeting on Tuesday, July 11, 2023 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. with the following members present: Mayor Sibold; Vice Mayor David S. Crosier; Councilman William E. Carson, Jr.; Councilman Fred F. Forbes. Also present were City Manager Allen Dressler and City Attorney Mark Popovich. Absent from the meeting was Councilman Raymond C. Hunter due to a death in the family.

The invocation was given by Pastor Doug Williams, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Crosier motioned to approve the agenda, seconded by Mr. Carson. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

**Citizen Comments**

Mr. Allen Whitmeyer, 916 N. Greenbrier Avenue, spoke about having no water pressure. He explained it had been looked at several times but there are still issues. He requested the issue be looked into as soon as possible in case of a fire in the future, and that the line going to McCallister Street needed to be checked. Mr. Dressler advised the issue would be addressed first thing in the morning.

**Special Presentation (Kim Halterman, Superintendent of Alleghany Highlands Public Schools)**

Ms. Halterman began by thanking Council for their support, not only financial, but other ways they provide their support. She said that consolidation is exerting downward pressure on rising educational costs faster than initially expected. It is crucial to believe in our kids, ourselves, and our community. Alleghany Highlands Public Schools has a strategic plan developed, indicating we are community partners as well as development partners. She thanked Darrell Gleason for his help with the website and other areas.

There will be additional opportunities and provisions for students, such as added career/technical options in advanced healthcare (Mountain Gateway Community College).

There will be an expanded swimming team, a wrestling team, and services for gifted students.

There will be equalized library funding and a new drumline/winter guard group.

There is a fresh appearance in many areas of Alleghany High School and Covington Middle School.

**Overview of the 2023/2024 School Year**

- 1) Redistricting to sensibly distribute elementary resources and maintain elementary schools
- 2) Secondary schools fully consolidated

July 11, 2023

#### Additional Opportunities and Provisions for Students

- 1) Proposed building management CTE program
- 2) Expanded CLASS program
- 3) Security camera updates
- 4) Significant improvements to AHS track and gym
- 5) Enhanced services to English language learners
- 6) Enhanced preschool programming housed in AHPS, which allows for the use of AHPS enrichment resources

Mayor Sibold said that Council gets approached by people asking how the city is saving money when so much is being spent on improvements. Ms. Halterman stated that they weren't sure they would spend less money in the first two years. She advised they were saving in personnel costs, and that a provision had already been made for the track project.

Ms. Rebecca Irvine stated that they ended the year with 1.7 million dollars, and any unused balances were put in a fund and returned to the school system after the Covid pandemic.

Ms. Irvine advised that the gym project is funded from consolidation money. The tennis project has not gotten off the ground as of yet. Most likely, the remaining balance will come out of county funds. Money will be retained until a decision is made on how to use it.

Mayor Sibold said he is pleased to see how much is getting accomplished for the school system.

A financial report will be provided by the school system quarterly per the agreement.

#### Appointments

- 1) Ninth District Financing Board of Directors-Mr. Crosier moved to reappoint Stephanie Clark to the Ninth District Financing Board of Directors, seconded by Mr. Carson. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

#### Minutes

Mr. Crosier motioned to approve the minutes for the work session held on June 6<sup>th</sup> and the regular meeting held on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, seconded by Mr. Carson. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

#### City Manager's Report

Mr. Dressler advised that the utility vehicle for the fire department will be delivered on Thursday. He is working with value engineering firms and the fire department regarding improvements to the burn building, which will get it functional again.

July 11, 2023

A simple park area in Dry Run is being discussed.

#### Casey Field

We have met with three local contractors and one out of area for bidding. Mr. Dressler is meeting with Ty Dobbs, the athletic director, on Thursday.

The stadium has been painted, and there is new seating.

We have had great communication with the Band Boosters. There are two concession stands available on junior varsity, middle school, and high school games.

There will be a scrimmage on August 11, 2023, and we will do everything we can to make it work.

#### Traffic Study at Covington Middle School

Mr. Dressler said he appreciated Value Engineering Firm and Chief Chris Smith and staff for their work in completing the traffic study at Covington Middle School, which will help prepare everyone for the first day of school.

The pocket park on Main Street is ready for public bid.

There will be a housing summit meeting with Allegheny County, Clifton Forge, and Covington to discuss moving forward to improve housing.

Money has been granted to begin the Rivermont project starting at the first part of August.

#### Maple/Phase 3 Project

There will be paving towards the end of July, beginning of August. The project has gone extremely well. Mr. Pat Loving has been very complimentary.

Mr. Dressler mentioned the letter that had been mailed to citizens regarding the water plant, assuring that Covington was still making great quality water. He advised that the city needs to up its Class 1 operators, with 2 being the requirement, and 3 being optimal. The city currently has one Class 1 operator. He said he feels comfortable with the staff the city currently has.

The transition of the fiscal year budget has been seamless, and Mr. Dressler stated he could not say enough about the accounting staff.

#### July 4<sup>th</sup>

There were several thousand attendees at the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration held at the Jackson River Sports Complex. Mr. Dressler gave kudos to Public Works for a wonderful job.

#### Christmas in July

The Christmas in July event held at the city pool/playground was great with a huge crowd.

July 11, 2023

Paving on Edgemont Drive will take place at the end of the week.

Mr. Dressler went on to say that people had their eye on Covington and the Alleghany Highlands. He said that things were looking positive and hopefully moving in a good direction.

### Resolutions

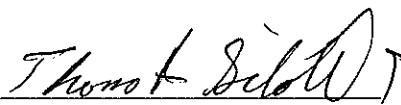
The following resolutions were passed by Council with a motion by Mr. Crosier, seconded by Mr. Carson, and affirmative votes of all Council members (Mr. Carson, Mr. Forbes, Vice Mayor Crosier, and Mayor Sibold).

- 1) Resolution R-23-20-Law Enforcement Equipment Grant
- 2) Resolution R-23-21-Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act (VJCCCA)

### New Business

Mr. Carson stated that Hillcrest looks great and a wonderful job had been done.

With no further business to come before Council, Mr. Crosier motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Carson. All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

  
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Thomas H. Sibold, Jr., Mayor

Attest:

  
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Kyla D. Crosier, City Clerk