

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
April 9, 2024**

Council for the City of Covington held a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 333 W. Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

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

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

Approval of Agenda

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

PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing was held in regards to pursuant to Sections 15.2-1427 (D), 15.2-2006, and 15.2-1800 of the Code of Virginia (1950, as amended) on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to consider an intent to vacate the right-of-way and disposition of public property with regards to a boundary adjustment survey between Wright Way Motors located at 820 South Lexington Avenue, Covington, VA, and Dewey's Automotive, LLC located at 609 West Chestnut Street, Covington, VA.

Mayor Sibold asked that Allen Dressler, City Manager, explain the public hearing. Mr. Dressler spoke about the properties between Wright Way Motors located at 820 South Lexington Avenue, Covington, Virginia, and Dewey's Automotive, LLC located at 609 West Chestnut Street, Covington, Virginia. This property between the businesses is an abandoned railroad track and for a few years both owners have been using the property. It would be fair for the property taxes to be paid by both owners. Mr. Wright has spoken about the possibility of expanding his business. There have been concerns by citizens of the safety for CMS (Covington Middle School) students with wreckers, etc...in and out of the property. There may be a requirement for a fence around the vehicles that have been in a collision.

Mayor Sibold asked if there are any comments from citizens that are 'for' or 'against' this change to please keep it to three minutes per person.

Mayor Sibold opened the public hearing and asked for anyone that would like to speak for this change. There were no citizens that spoke for this change.

Mayor Sibold asked if there was anyone that would like to speak against the public hearing.

Dewey Perkins, Jr., one of the owners of Dewey's Automotive, LLC, spoke that closing this road would cause them to not be able to bring in tractor trailers because they would not be able to make the turn. That the City should not be bias and it would cause 6-8 lots to become landlocked and he would not be able to get to utilities or expand his business. He mentioned that the owner of Wright Way Motors sent a message that he would like to sell his property to him. Mayor Sibold asked if he would purchase the property would he want the street to remain open and Mr. Perkins stated that yes he would still want the road to remain open. Mr. Perkins stated that there would need to be a right-of-way because there is a steep bank and a truck cannot drive on it. He is thinking of building a garage that has doors on both ends and it can be used for in and out work.

Lance Perkins, also an owner of Dewey's Automotive, LLC, spoke that his brother Dewey had mentioned everything and he agrees that this change would be detrimental to the business. They are very careful when driving in and out of the business, turn slow and cautiously, especially with the school nearby. He would also like the road to be kept as is.

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James Downey, employee at Dewey's Automotive, LLC, stated that the road should stay like it is. He mentioned they do paint and repair on school buses at Dewey's.

Mayor Sibold closed the public hearing.

The Mayor stated that he would like to address this next month. The ordinance is not prepared. This item will be tabled until next month.

Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

CONSENT AGENDA/CORRECTION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Crosier motioned to approve the following minutes, seconded by Mr. Hunter:

- 1) Work Session-March 5, 2024
- 2) Regular Meeting-March 12, 2024
- 3) Reconvened Joint Meeting-March 19, 2024

All members were in favor with "aye" votes.

REPORT OF CITY MANAGER

Tour/Project

Mr. Dressler met with DEQ and Engineers at the WWTP-Wastewater Treatment Plant, \$8 million dollar EQ Basin project to tour the plant. There are a few small items that need to be wrapped up otherwise it is completed.

There will be a \$6 million dollar grant project for wastewater lines throughout a portion of the City beginning soon.

Shadowing Student

Elijah Halterman, shadowing student, has been working with Mr. Dressler. He is interested in Civil Engineering. They have been in budget meetings, staff meetings, had the opportunity to sit in a meeting with a Civil Engineer, met staff and their roles at City Hall, rode throughout the City with Anthony Lowry, Public Works Director, to see the City's water/wastewater plants, landfill and public works offices. Elijah had good statements and questions throughout his shadowing visits.

Meetings

Mr. Dressler and David Bryant, Jr., Director of Finance, have meet with departments on budget. There has been open discussion on the requests for next year. Central Accounting will be working on getting the budget together for Manager review before going to Council.

Paving

There have been notices sent out for milling and paving in the Fairlawn/Scotland areas.

Sidewalks

There were 3 sidewalk bids received, two were local and one from outside the area. There will be a review of bids on Wednesday.

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Hydrant Flushing

The hydrant flushing has begun and will be done at night, for less inconvenience for citizens.

Projects/Recycling/Utility bills for plants & Tour

The underpass across from the CMS has had lights fixed and work completed on the walkway.

The recycling area at the Nettleton property provides a much needed service to area citizens. The Public Works staff maintain it four times a day, Monday-Friday and work on weekends to clean up. He asked that old furniture, dead animals, etc.. to please not be left for staff to pick up. There are spring and fall cleanups in the City.

Mr. Dressler spoke about the budget for the plants: the water filtration for the plant on Dry Run have approximate monthly bills of: \$200,000 electricity, \$160,000 for chemicals, with repairs and maintenance the budget is over \$1,920,000; the wastewater plant has approximately \$67,000 a month electricity bill, \$90,000 for chemicals, with repairs and maintenance the budget is over \$1,100,000; the landfill and refuse departments total budgets are over \$4 million. The utility bills sent to citizens are only \$88 per month.

Vice Mayor Crosier mentioned that Council toured the plants a few years ago. Mr. Dressler will have a new tour set up after there has been some drying out from heavy rains. There is a lot grass to mow at the plants and some grass/fencing work would be good for state agencies coming to the plants for inspections, etc...

Burn Building

Vice Mayor Crosier spoke about there being a mention of County and City fire training grounds. The City currently has a burn building near the walking trail in Dry Run. Mr. Dressler confirmed there is a burn building study being done. There is a search for grants. The area at the burn building is in a beautiful area and there needs to be a shelter for the fire department volunteers. Kevin Pettitt, Fire Chief Andrew Baker, and Anthony Lowry have all been a big plus for all their work/volunteering in the area Fire Departments.

Mowing

Mr. Carson asked about the City's mowing being done by Public Works staff. Mr. Dressler confirmed that yes they have taken it on and have done a good job.

Cathy Kimberlin, Commissioner of Revenue, spoke about the Allocation Percentage for Personal Property Tax Relief Program or "PPTRA" and it being a requirement. This break is available again. She arrived at 43% if: the vehicle is below \$20,000 in value, a personal use vehicle/not for business, not a boat or not a motor home. If a vehicle is taxed and meets the requirements, it will automatically be qualified. Mayor Sibold thanked Ms. Kimberlin for the explanation.

Mr. Hunter asked about the sidewalk work. Mr. Dressler stated that there will be work done by VDOT/Engineers on Alleghany Avenue to Pine Street. They have not notified the City when work will begin. Work is also needed on sidewalks in other areas in the City such as the Beauty Salon on Monroe. Mayor Sibold mentioned work needed on McDonald for wheelchair accessibility and Loving Funeral Home on Riverside.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice Mayor Crosier asked about the debris at the former pub on Jackson Street in the turn. Mr. Dressler stated it is being addressed and cleaning up between the buildings has been completed with more cleanup to be done.

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ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Crosier motioned to approve the following ordinances, seconded by Mr. Hunter.

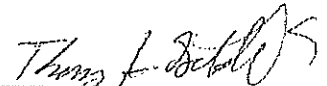
- 1) To consider Resolution R-24-11 Setting the Allocation Percentage for Personal Property Tax Relief Program or "PPTRA"
- 2) To consider Resolution R-24-12 Donations to Twinkle Lights Show Fund
- 3) To consider Resolution R-24-13 Paving Plan

The roll call votes were as follows: Mr. Carson, for; Mr. Forbes, for; Mr. Hunter, for; Vice Mayor Crosier, for; Mayor Sibold, for.

NEW BUSINESS


There was no new business.

Vice Mayor Crosier motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Carson. All members were in favor with 'aye' votes.



THOMAS H. SIBOLD, JR., MAYOR

ATTEST:



RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY
REBECCA BRATTON NUCKOLS
ACTING CITY CLERK