

**ST. CLAIRSVILLE CITY COUNCIL
July 29, 2020 Special Council Meeting**

[Teleconference format in compliance with temporary changes to Ohio's Open Meetings Act]

Jim Velas, Council President
Perry Basile, Council, 1st Ward
Mark Bukmir, Council, 3rd Ward
Terra Butler, Council, 4th Ward
Linda Jordan, Council-At-Large
Beth Oprisch, Council-At-Large
Frank Sabatino, Council 2nd Ward
Mike Smith, Council-At-Large

Kathryn Thalman, Mayor
Open, Public Service/Safety Director
Annette Williams, Finance Director
Elizabeth Glick, Law Director
Don Smithberger, Super. of General Services
Tom Murphy, Planning & Zoning Administrator

Special meeting was called to order by Council President Jim Velas at 7:02pm. President Velas led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. He thanked residents for listening in to the meeting.

ROLL CALL:

Basile	HERE	Oprisch	HERE
Bukmir	HERE	Sabatino	HERE
Butler	HERE	Smith	HERE
Jordan	HERE	Seven (7) Present	Zero (0) Absent

President Velas announced the special meeting was called to further discuss personnel matters: a candidate for Service/Safety Director in Executive Session. Monday evening's Council meeting will feature a presentation from AEP.

Councilman Sabatino asked why a second reading of the Service/Safety Director legislation will take place tonight. He said Council was informed by President Velas that this special meeting was called to discuss the salary of the position; adding that a special meeting's topic is the only topic that can be discussed. He said he felt he has been deceived. President Velas said there is no guarantee a second reading will take place; it would depend on the outcome of the Executive Session. Law Director Glick had not seen the notice but agreed with Councilman Sabatino regarding his remarks on special meetings.

EXECUTIVE SESSION was called by Mayor Thalman per ORC §121.22(G)(1) to discuss personnel matters. A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch to enter Executive Session; seconded by Councilwoman Butler.

ROLL CALL:

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	NO	Sabatino	NO
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	NO		

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Three (3) NO Executive Session not entered

President Velas announced Executive Session could not be entered and that discussion could not take place. Councilwoman Oprisch asked for those Councilmembers who voted not to go into Executive Session to explain their vote. Law Director Glick said they may give a reason if they would like, but there is no obligation. Councilman Sabatino said it is Council that decides the salary of Service/Safety Director, which he was not given the chance to provide input. He also called for transparency, adding that he felt the public should be able to listen to the discussions. Law Director Glick stated when discussing salary, it is done in Executive Session.

Mayor Thalman said she called this special meeting to discuss figures related to the position and had Annette Williams provide financials to Council. She resented the comment that she is not

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being transparent. The mayor said the salary for the candidate is a firm figure set by the candidate himself. She also added that she finds the situation to be beyond frustrating and that City officials have an obligation to work together to better the City.

Councilwoman Oprisch prefaced that there was concern by several Councilmembers regarding the position's salary and that tonight's special Council meeting would address these concerns. She cited that the mayor called for this special meeting. The Councilwoman continued that she cannot understand why Council should not go into Executive Session when concerns were originally brought up at last week's meeting. Councilwoman Butler discussed the precedence set by Council hiring the Chief of Police and Finance Director. In those cases, Council would enter Executive Session to discuss the position or salary and a second reading would take place after; adding that months ago, several members of Council asked why the City had not yet obtained a Service/Safety Director. The Councilwoman expressed her disbelief, calling it ridiculous and tiresome. Councilman Basile noted Councilman Bukmir wanted to go into Executive Session at the last meeting. President Velas said giving opinions are fine, but a vote has already been taken. He apologized if he misled anyone in the email calling for the special meeting.


Councilwoman Oprisch felt the frustration expressed by Council to be justified. She continued that at the last meeting, she asked Councilwoman Butler to rescind her motion and allow Council to go into Executive Session to address Councilman Bukmir's concerns. She said she believes all concerns should be heard but was fine with Councilwoman Butler's decision not to rescind her motion. It has been asked several times why the City does not have a Service/Safety Director. She concluded these actions do not advance the City and are obstructionist.

Councilwoman Jordan said the candidate may have the credentials, but the candidate has no experience in the actual position of Service/Safety Director. She added that she does not see the justification in paying a salary on par with candidates who may have 30 years of experience. Councilwoman Oprisch appreciated Councilwoman Jordan's difference in opinion but expressed her frustration that the discussion was blocked from taking place. Councilwoman Butler made a call for Council to come together, citing some are willing and some are not willing.


Due to the way the communication from President Velas was written, the Law Director confirmed a second reading of the legislation cannot be performed.

ADJOURNMENT: With there being no further business to come before Council, Councilman Sabatino made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:33pm.

Next meeting will be Monday, August 3, 2020 at 7:30pm via teleconference.



Jason Garczyk, Council Clerk



Jim Velas, Council President