

**ST. CLAIRSVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**September 8, 2020 Meeting**

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

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

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

The meeting was called to order by Council President Jim Velas at 7:31pm. President Velas led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members of the public were thanked for listening.

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**MINUTES:** President Velas confirmed all councilmembers received the minutes from the last meeting. Councilman Basile made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 17, 2020 Council meeting; motion seconded by Councilman Smith.

**ROLL CALL:**

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	YES	Sabatino	YES
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES		
Roll Call Vote:	Seven (7) YES	Zero (0) NO	Minutes Approved

**REPORTS: Mayor Kathryn Thalman** updated Council that alternate traffic routes are still being sought for the City. The mayor met with GPD Group, saying the City needs a long term plan. Proposals to be forthcoming. She updated Council that a solar power facility for the City is not possible until a tract of suitable land is available. The mayor met with the owner of Kimble Refuse regarding their new transfer station to be constructed east of town. The City received the Cooperator of the Year award from the Belmont Soil & Water Conservation District. September 13-19 was declared as Direct Support Professional Support Week. The mayor also acknowledged September 14-18 as Chamber of Commerce Week. Food Truck Fridays have been very successful, with the St. Clairsville Marching Band performing for the reopening of the Heritage Museum. The mayor expressed her gratitude to Domino's, Newellstown Diner, Pizza Milano, Pizza Shack, Riesbeck Food Markets, and Walmart for their generous donations of food and drinks, as well as everyone involved, when about 75 students sought shelter at the Recreation Center during a recent football game due to a storm. Regarding the Recreation Center, a \$16,000 grant was awarded through the Community Foundation for the Ohio Valley for COVID relief to make the locker rooms and bathrooms touchless. This is in response to COVID-19. The mayor thanked Sean Hanley and Debbie Reed for their work on this. She also thanked several city employees for their work on the recent water audit. The tornado siren is tested the first Monday of the month at noon. Several members of Council commended the mayor for her work.

**Service/Safety Director Jeremy Greenwood** has been reviewing department budgets, looking at ways to save money, and reviewing spending procedures. Mr. Greenwood has been visiting

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each of the departments. Employee meetings are taking place, getting ideas and insights. Civil Service Exam recently took place with 14 attending; interviews for a wastewater employee will commence soon. Meetings with Vaughn, Coast & Vaughn Engineers regarding the East End Water Connection have been fruitful, discovering 2,000 linear feet of 8" pipe put in place during an ODOT paving project. The county is reviewing their drawings. The Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association (OMEGA) funding may be available for 50% of the project through the Appalachian Regional Commission with a 50% loan. The pipes on Bellview Street appear to be in good condition for their age after viewing with a camera. All funding options are being reviewed. The City has submitted to the Ohio EPA for funding through the Water Pollution Control Fund Program. Ohio Public Works funds are still available. COVID funding has been awarded. The City is looking at using these funds for supplies and also a touchless fingerprinting system, allowing the City to perform their own background checks. Also addressed were: technology upgrades for meetings, hazard pay for staff, updating door hardware, digital thermometers, and touchless restroom fixtures for all buildings. As addressed by the mayor, the Recreation Center received its grant. Additional funding is being sought for the project. The water audit concluded the City's water loss is approximately 30-32%. This number will need to be reduced, addressing larger leaks before purchasing water from the county. Leak detection equipment and training will be needed as well as infrastructure updates. Two EPA findings and orders still need addressed: painting pipe, which will be completed next week, and retiring the Provident Reservoir. An action plan is being created. The charter and board members of the Fire Board are being assessed. A meeting with Richland Township will take place on Thursday. The plan is to form a five member board, two from the City and two from the township, with a board-elected president who would only vote in the event of a tie. Mr. Greenwood has been working with Hull & Associates to create an Emergency Action Plan and Operations, Maintenance & Inspection Manuals for the reservoir dams since the Ohio Department of Natural Resources reclassified the City's reservoirs as Class 1 instead of Class 2. Mr. Greenwood's first three weeks have seen 22 hours, 55 hours, and 54 hours of time spent working, respectively. Several members of Council expressed their thanks to Mr. Greenwood for his work.

**Police Chief Matt Arbenz** reported 373 calls for service in August. Officer Weyand is completing his final week of training with the new K-9 unit Odin and will be ready to patrol next week. Other than chipping a tooth, training has gone very well. A root canal will be required. Funds may need to be transferred to cover the procedure. Online trainings have been happening; at least two hours per month for each officer. Crash reports have recently been converted online. Digital fingerprint scanners are being considered. The 12-gauge shotguns are being converted to a less lethal weapon. Officer Yates is certified to train.

Several Councilmembers expressed their thanks and appreciation for the crew's work. Chief Arbenz added the K-9 unit will be able to detect narcotics, locate missing persons, and apprehend individuals after asked by Councilman Smith. Mayor Thalman asked if health insurance is necessary for the K-9 unit. Because of the generous work of Dr. Yurko providing almost all veterinary services free for K-9 officers, Chief Arbenz didn't feel it would be necessary. A root canal is a specialized procedure and would be performed elsewhere.

**Finance Director Annette Williams** reported the 2019 audit was recently completed and the draft is available. She explained the ordinances and resolution before Council. Resolution No.

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2020-28 is a certification from the county passed annually explaining the funds the City receives from levies. The City received \$208,703.18 through the corona relief fund. These funds need appropriated and the fund established.

Councilman Bukmir asked about the findings of the 2019 audit. The final report has not been released. Councilman Bukmir also asked about the \$12,300 figure in Ordinance No. 2020-29 listed as personal services. This amount is for the Law Director since she opted to be paid directly and not have her firm be paid separately as done with past Law Directors. Ms. Glick would be paid through payroll for all of her services. Councilwoman Jordan asked about the figures in Ordinance No. 2020-30. Ms. Williams said the list is what appropriation line items will be added. She added the funds must be appropriated before the City can spend it. Councilwoman Jordan requested that Council receive the listing. Councilwoman Jordan also asked about the funds in Ordinance No. 2020-29. Ms. Williams replied normally the costs would be shared between the Law Director and the firm, but since Ms. Glick will receive the entire amount, it needs to be transferred. Councilwoman Oprisch requested the draft report of the audit.

**Planning & Zoning Administrator Tom Murphy** addressed the 2020 Census, reporting the self-response rate for the City is 73.2%. The 2010 Census was 77.7%. Enumerators are in the field doing work. The City could see a response rate of 95.3% if enumerators perform at the state average.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Finance Chair Mike Smith** requested a committee meeting soon. No report.

**Utilities Chair Beth Oprisch** reported the committee met before the Council meeting via teleconference. It was open to the public. Mr. Greenwood addressed the committee. Budget program idea was revisited. Council ensued discussion whether to begin charging reconnection fees for September. An average of 30-35 disconnections are made per month; roughly 150 disconnections are slated for the morning of September 15.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Jordan to delay charging reconnection fees on September 15; seconded by Councilwoman Oprisch. Subject to be readdressed at the September 21 meeting.

**ROLL CALL:**

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	YES	Sabatino	YES
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES		
Roll Call Vote:	Seven (7) YES	Zero (0) NO	Motion Carried

**Police Chair Mark Bukmir:** No report

**Streets – North Side Chair Terra Butler:** No report

**Streets – South Side Chair Beth Oprisch:** No report

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**Safety Chair Terra Butler:** No report

**Building and Grounds Chair Perry Basile:** No report

**Planning Commission Chair Frank Sabatino:** No report

**Fire Chair Frank Sabatino** reported the Fire Board met on August 26. The resignation of a full-time employee was accepted; a part-time and a full-time employee were hired. The department will intend to purchase an ambulance in 2021; an unsuccessful attempt to purchase a used ambulance was discussed. Next meeting will be September 9 at 3pm at the ECOESC.

**Recreation Chair Linda Jordan** reported flag football begins September 20. Halloween event on October 24 at 12pm. Recreation Department has been awarded a \$16,000 grant as discussed in the mayor's report. Next meeting Monday, September 21.

**Park District Chair Linda Jordan:** No report. Next meeting Monday, September 14.

**ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:** Law Director Elizabeth Glick was not present.

A motion was made by Councilman Smith that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Resolution No. 2020-28 and that the resolution be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilwoman Oprisch.

**RESOLUTION No. 2020-28:** RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE AMOUNTS AND RATES AS DETERMINED BY THE BUDGET COMMISSION AND AUTHORIZING THE NECESSARY TAX LEVIES AND CERTIFYING THEM TO THE COUNTY AUDITOR; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

**ROLL CALL:**

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	YES	Sabatino	YES
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Seven (7) YES Zero (0) NO Rules requiring three separate readings suspended

Vote to pass Resolution No. 2020-28:

**ROLL CALL:**

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	YES	Sabatino	YES
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Seven (7) YES Zero (0) NO Motion Carried

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance No. 2020-29 and that the ordinance be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilman Smith.

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Councilman Bukmir asked whether the \$12,300 figure is salary to date or for the entire year. The Finance Director said it is to allocate funds for the remainder of the year. Ms. Glick has been paid what she has been owed so far.

**ORDINANCE No. 2020-29: AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE REALLOCATIONS (SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS) WITHIN THE FUNDS FOR THE NORMAL EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF ST. CLAIRSVILLE, STATE OF OHIO, FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2020 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2020; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ROLL CALL:**

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

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Two (2) NO One (1) ABSTAIN

Rules requiring three separate readings failed

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance No. 2020-30 and that the ordinance be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilman Basile.

Ms. Williams stated the City has received funds; they need appropriated. If the funds are not spent, they must be returned.

**ORDINANCE No. 2020-30: AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE CORONA RELIEF FUND #2151 ALONG WITH THE NECESSARY REVENUE ACCOUNTS AND NECESSARY APPROPRIATIONS; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

**ROLL CALL:**

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	YES	Sabatino	YES
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Seven (7) YES Zero (0) NO Rules requiring three separate readings suspended

Vote to pass Ordinance No. 2020-30:

**ROLL CALL:**

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	YES	Sabatino	YES
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Seven (7) YES Zero (0) NO Motion Carried

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**OLD BUSINESS:** Councilwoman Jordan asked when Council meetings can be held in person again. President Velas said issues with the Recreation Center would have to be addressed before holding a meeting there.

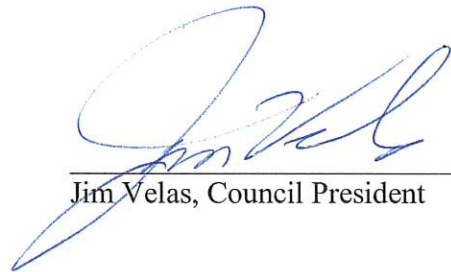
**ADJOURNMENT:** With no action to take and there being no further business to come before Council, Councilman Smith made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:11pm.

Next meeting will be Monday, September 21, 2020 at 7:30pm via teleconference.



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Jason Garczyk, Council Clerk



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Jim Velas, Council President