

**ST. CLAIRSVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**December 7, 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 7:32pm. 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 Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 16, 2020 Council meeting; motion seconded by Councilwoman Butler.

**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 reported she has participated in several meetings including personnel and the Mayor's Association. Remaining TIF funds will be spent appropriately regarding the Commons. State Auditor Keith Faber visited St. Clairsville recently. A Christmas parade will be held December 19; details to be released closer to the date. The mayor thanked the crews for their work during the recent snow. She thanked those who served our country and sacrificed their lives on this date 79 years ago at Pearl Harbor. She urged residents to continue practicing the governor's safety protocols.

**Service/Safety Director Jeremy Greenwood** reported he has been working with Finance Director Williams and Law Director Glick regarding CARES Act funding. He has had several meetings – including with Rob Stein of the Commons Project and Terry Foster regarding insurance on the city's two dams. Monthly dam inspections have been reinstated. The Recreation Center is open for groups of less than ten people. Renting a building to Belmont Soil and Water Conservation District is still in consideration as well as transferring the Fire Department building to Cumberland Trail. Training will be scheduled for the new water distribution leak detection system. Budget meetings will take place for all departments this week. Additional CARES Act funding has been received and drafted as legislation for Council to vote on this evening. Emails for Council will be ready soon; still waiting on iPads. AFSCME contract negotiations continue. City employees have been working on trimming trees, picking up bagged leaves, repairing several water breaks, filling potholes, etc. Concrete was recently laid leading to the Utilities Office window. Several employees are out sick and staying home as a precaution. A nurse will be on site for rapid testing of city employees Tuesday 12pm-2pm.

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Councilman Sabatino asked about Ordinance No. 2020-36 and funds being used under the same line item. Mr. Greenwood said this is an additional \$57,000 the city received. Law Director said she will keep the city informed regarding Gulfport's recent bankruptcy after asked by Councilman Sabatino. Councilwoman Jordan stated she wants to continue using her current email as opposed to having a city email. She asked about the \$72 monthly fee for the new emails and whether CARES funding would cover the costs. Mr. Greenwood said it would initially; the city will have to pay for part of the cost eventually.

**Police Chief Matt Arbenz** reported there were 277 calls, 9 arrests, 70 traffic stops, and 6 accidents. Year-end assigned training is being completed. Currently working with FSA to implement a drone program; this could be a benefit to all departments. Chief Arbenz has started the process for accreditation with the Ohio Collaborative Community Advisory Board – an organization that ensures departments are set up with good policies, procedures, and compliance.

Councilman Sabatino requested Chief Arbenz remind residents about the requirements for street parking during snow. This information will be placed on the city website; he is aware of problem areas. Councilman Smith asked about the new patrol car. Chief Arbenz reported it is performing great; it will be outfitted for its final pieces of equipment this week.

**Finance Director Annette Williams** reported she will be meeting with department heads to create a temporary budget for 2021. Legislation will be at the next Council meeting. Representatives from Liberty National Life recently offered employees additional life/cancer policies; five employees signed at no cost to the city.

**Planning & Zoning Administrator Tom Murphy** reported Campbell Oil, owner of Bellstore, has invested \$3.8 million in purchase of the gas station and car wash on S. Marietta Street. Project is expected to commence work late 2021. Mr. Murphy has been working with Law Director Glick on a few properties that are in violation of the property maintenance code. Convenient Food Mart, located at the former Crosby Oil, has preliminary plans to build an addition. The first step is submitting plans to the Board of Architectural Review; this first step could be as soon as January 2021.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS: Finance Chair Mike Smith:** No report

**Utilities Chair Beth Oprisch** reported the Utilities Committee met prior to tonight's meeting. Discussed policy drafts as well as future legislation. Anita and staff were thanked for their work.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Butler to suspend/waive reconnection fees through the month of December; seconded by Councilwoman Oprisch.

Discussion ensued whether to suspend/waive reconnection fees.

**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            Motion Carried

**Police Chair Mark Bukmir:** No report

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**Streets – North Side Chair Terra Butler** requested Service Director Greenwood summarize the steps that have been taken to find a solution for issues on Bellview Street. Funding is the issue.

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

**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 held their regular meeting on November 18. Three part-time employees were hired; one part-time employee submitted resignation. The city was thanked for their recent donation to the fire department. Former Chief John Slavik was appointed to serve as the third member of the Fire Board effective December 1, 2020. Next meeting will be Wednesday, December 16 at 3pm at the ECOESC.

**Recreation Chair Linda Jordan** reported Sean and Debbie are working on virtual Christmas events. Check the website and Facebook page for more information. Any donations of Christmas decorations and items are welcome and appreciated. Next meeting will be January 18.

**Park District Chair Linda Jordan** reported the park has been winterized and will be closed from December 15 to March 15. The second 9-hole set of the disc golf course has been completed and very popular; the board thanked Adam Kirsop for his work on the project. Rotary shelter rental has been lowered to \$75 for Saturdays/Sundays/holidays and \$50 during the week.

Mayor Thalman inquired whether residents may cross country ski at park. Councilwoman Jordan replied she did not know, but stated the park would be closed, so assumedly one could not.

**ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:** Law Director Elizabeth Glick addressed the one piece of legislation before Council this evening. Service Director Greenwood added the legislation needs to be passed on emergency to meet the end of the month deadline.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance No. 2020-36 and that the ordinance be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilwoman Butler.

**ORDINANCE No. 2020-36: AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS 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	YES	Sabatino	YES
Butler	YES	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES		

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

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Vote to pass Ordinance No. 2020-36:

ROLL CALL:

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

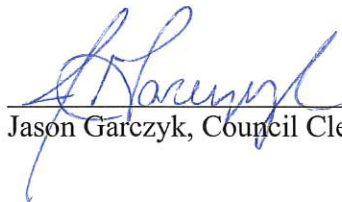
Roll Call Vote:            Seven (7) YES            Zero (0) NO            Motion Carried

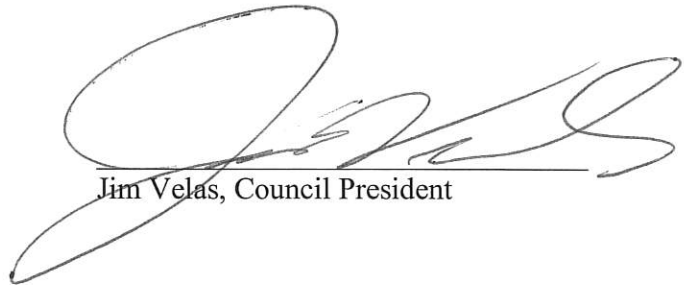
**OLD BUSINESS:** Several councilmembers congratulated former Finance Director Cindi Henry on her victory for the unexpired term for Belmont County Auditor. Councilman Basile asked about 2021 reconfiguration of council committees; President Velas has been working on this. President Velas noted Larry Taylor from Volunteer Energy Services will speak before Council on December 21 regarding the city's natural gas aggregation contract.

Councilwoman Oprisch asked about the status of finding a replacement for Council Clerk and whether the position has been advertised. President Velas has been hopeful – talking to several individuals. He said it is up to Council to provide names for consideration, adding he is not aware of advertisement of the position in the past. Any interested candidates may contact President Velas or the current Council Clerk.

**ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business to come before Council, Councilman Sabatino made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.

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

  
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Jason Garczyk, Council Clerk

  
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Jim Velas, Council President