

ST. CLAIRSVILLE CITY COUNCIL
August 2, 2021 Meeting

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
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 7:30 pm. President Velas led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members of the public were thanked for their attendance.

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 July 19th Council meeting. Councilman Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from July 19, 2021, 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 Zero (0) Absent Minutes Approved

REPORTS: Mayor Kathryn Thalman reports that she had a meeting at East Ohio Regional Hospital to discuss PR for the upcoming blood drive on August 25. The mayor also wanted to encourage everyone to donate blood due to the blood shortage in the country. Mayor had a Zoom meeting with Chief Arbenz regarding the purchase of a City App that would be a source for information and a valuable resource to disseminate information quickly to the public. Mayor met with Service Director Jeremy Greenwood and Don Smithberger to discuss infrastructure and the recent water line breaks.

Service/Safety Director Jeremy Greenwood reports an update on a prior HR issue and recommended an executive session. Mr. Greenwood says that the chlorine injector and feeders at the west end wastewater plant are up and running; he also submitted the body camera grant. The installation of the exterior light for the awning on the city building is finished. The project was moving forward with the East-End Connection and scheduled a pre-construction meeting. Mr. Greenwood reported that there was a water line leak discovered underneath the interstate; he stated that there are two lines that are in that area, and as of now, he is unsure which line is leaking; he is working with ODOT, along with an engineering firm to try and work out a fix. Mr. Greenwood is getting the staff updated on the National Incident Management System training. Mr. Greenwood named Mr. Scott Harvey of the Wastewater Department as August's employee

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of the month. Mr. Greenwood reported that he has so far received five applications for the Director of the Rec Center.

Councilman Sabatino questioned Mr. Greenwood on whether most of the waterline breaks in the City were being fixed in-house or contracted out. Mr. Greenwood stated that it is a case-by-case basis. Councilman Sabatino asked for a percentage of the City's work on waterline breaks. Mr. Greenwood stated that roughly ninety to ninety-five percent of the waterline breaks were repaired by the City itself.

Councilwoman Oprisch questioned Mr. Greenwood on the deadline for when no more application will be accepted for the position of Director of the Rec Center. Mr. Greenwood stated that Monday August 9th is the deadline.

Councilman Smith questioned Mr. Greenwood on whether he thinks that the water loss is due to the leak under the interstate. Mr. Greenwood stated that it is possible that the water loss is due to the recent discovery, but it is premature to say with any certainty.

Police Matt Arbenz reports there were 413 calls for service, 25 criminal arrests, 7 warrants served, 2 domestic cases, and 136 traffic stops. The Police Department is doing training next Monday, along with three other local departments. Chief Arbenz addressed the possible purchase of the City app, stating that it would be a useful for the City and both the Police and Fire Department.

Councilwoman Oprisch questioned Chief Arbenz on how the City app would pair with the current Code Red system in place. Chief Arbenz stated that the app would not replace Code Red, but instead be an additional resource for the citizens.

Councilman Sabatino questioned Chief Arbenz on why the tornado siren didn't not go off during the recent tornado warning. Chief Arbenz stated that it is being investigated and tested by the Fire Department.

Finance Director Annette Williams reports that the City received the first half of the American Rescue Plan money at a sum of \$269,262 and furthermore stated that the City should receive the same amount sometime next year.

Planning & Zoning Administrator Tom Murphy [absent] Mr. Greenwood read a statement on Mr. Murphy's behalf stating that by August 16th the U.S. Census Bureau will be releasing the demographic statistics from the 2020 Census, this will include population count for the city and other communities in Belmont County and around the country.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Chair Mike Smith No report. [Next meeting is Monday, August 16th at 6:45 P.M.]

Utilities Chair Terra Butler reports that there was a sewer credit request for \$59.40 that was unanimously denied by all three of the committee members, and furthermore explained that there was another sewer credit request for \$127.76 which was also unanimously denied. Ms. Butler

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stated that the committee discussed adding a message on all utility bills encouraging citizens to enroll in the Code Red system. Ms. Butler reported that the committee discussed a policy change for cases when individuals know they will be using large amounts of water so that they will not be charged for sewer fees.

Police Chair Beth Oprisch No report [Next meeting is Monday, August 9th at 7:00 P.M.]

Streets – North Side Chair Perry Basile reports that he would like to thank Mr. Greenwood for the speedy repair on Pinecrest Drive. Mr. Basile also reported that there is foliage growing out into the street on Talbot Avenue.

Streets – South Side Chair Frank Sabatino reports that he has been working with Mr. Greenwood on several issues on Young Lane and hopes that he could get a resolution on both the issues.

Safety Chair Frank Sabatino No report.

Building and Grounds Chair Perry Basile No report.

Planning Commission Chair Frank Sabatino No report.

Fire Chair Frank Sabatino No report. [Next meeting is Wednesday, August 25th at 3:00 P.M.]

Recreation Chair Linda Jordan No report.

Park District Chair Linda Jordan No report.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS: Law Director Elizabeth Glick addressed four pieces of legislation before Council.

First Reading

Ordinance No. 2021-19: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY COUNCIL TO INCREASE THE COMPENSATION OF SOME OF ITS EMPLOYEES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

President Velas asked council their thought on the two different versions of legislation 2021-19, which could either be a 3% or 2.5% raise for city employees.

Councilman Sabatino stated that he is against either version of the legislation due to the fact that most the high-end administrative employees received a \$6000 raise recently and that all City employees received an \$800 bonus in November with the recent COVID money the City received.

Councilman Bukmir stated he was concerned that the City did not have the money to support these raises. Financial Director Williams stated that the 3% raise was budgeted in this years budget.

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Councilman Basile stated that since the employees didn't receive a raise last year, he thinks it would be best to pass the 3% raise for cost of living.

Councilman Smith stated that he would like to receive a dollar amount to see how much the raises are going to cost.

Councilwoman Jordan asked that if the City would become a village would these raises cause any issues in the future. Law Director Glick stated that since the raises were budgeted that in this fiscal year we would be covered, but in the next fiscal year she cannot answer with any certainty if any issues could arise.

A motion was made by Councilman Basile that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance 2021-20 and that the ordinance be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilman Smith.

Ordinance No. 2021-20: 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, 2021 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021 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	Zero (0) ABSENT

Rules requiring three separate readings suspended

Vote to pass Ordinance No. 2021-20:

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	Zero (0) Absent	Motion Carried

A motion was made by Councilwoman Jordan that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance 2021-21 and that the ordinance be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilman Basile.

Ordinance No. 2021-21: AN ORDANINCE TO ESTABLISH THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUND #2152 ALONG WITH THE NECESSARY REVENUE ACCOUNTS AND NECESSARY APPROPRIATIONS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

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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 Zero (0) Absent Motion Carried

Rules requiring three separate readings suspended

Vote to pass Ordinance No. 2021-21:

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 Zero (0) Absent Motion Carried

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance 2021-22 and that the ordinance be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilman Basile.

Ordinance No. 2021-22: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF ST. CLAIRSVILLE TO ENTER INTO A FACILITIES AGREEMENT WITH THE AMERICAN ELECTRIC POWER SERVICE CORPORATION, AS AGENT FOR OHIO POWER COMPANY AND AEP OHIO TRANSMISSION COMPANY, INC., 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 Zero (0) Absent Motion Carried

Rules requiring three separate readings suspended

Vote to pass Ordinance No. 2021-22:

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 Zero (0) Absent Motion Carried

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EXECUTIVE SESSION was recommended by Law Director Elizabeth Glick per ORC 121.22 (G)(3) Conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action.

ROLL CALL:

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

Roll Call Vote: Six (6) YES One (1) NO Zero (0) Absent Motion Carried

Before entering the Executive Session, Councilwoman Butler asked to make a statement. Ms. Butler reports that an individual is leaking information on Executive Sessions. Councilwoman Butler requested that an investigation take place into the validity of these reports. Councilwoman Oprisch also stated the matter needed to be investigated based on the seriousness of the allegations. During the conversation of an investigation, a citizen in the audience became unruly, which lead to a profane verbal outburst by the citizen toward two council members.

Executive Session entered at 8:35 pm.

Councilwoman Oprisch made a motion to exit Executive Session and resume open Regular Session; seconded by Councilman Smith. Regular Session resumed at 9:20 pm.

Councilwoman Oprisch made a motion to allow the Law Director to proceed with annexation process of a property North of the City limits; seconded by Councilman Basile.

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 Zero (0) Absent Motion Carried

EXECUTIVE SESSION was recommended by Law Director Elizabeth Glick per ORC 121.22 (G)(1) To consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual, unless the public employee, official, licensee, or regulated individual requests a public hearing.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch to enter Executive Session; seconded by Councilman Smith.

ROLL CALL:

Basile	YES	Oprisch	YES
Bukmir	YES	Sabatino	YES

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Butler YES Smith YES
Jordan YES
Roll Call Vote: Seven (7) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) Absent Motion Carried

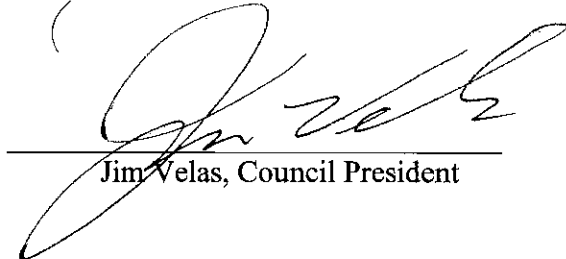
Executive Session entered at 9:25 pm.

Councilman Smith made a motion to exit Executive Session and resume open Regular Session; seconded by Councilwoman Jordan. Regular Session resumed at 9:33 pm.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to come before Council, Councilman Sabatino made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilman Smith. Meeting adjourned at 9:37 pm.

Next meeting will be Monday, August 16th, 2021, at 7:30 pm. All Councilmembers will be present at the City building for the next meeting. Members of the public are welcome to join the in-person meeting in the Council Chambers.


Jacob DeBertrand, Council Clerk


Jim Velas, Council President