

**ST. CLAIRSVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**July 3, 2023 Meeting**

Jim Velas, Council President  
Don Vincenzo, Council, 1<sup>st</sup> Ward  
Kristi Lipscomb, Council, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward  
Terra Butler, Council, 4<sup>th</sup> Ward  
Linda Jordan, Council-At-Large  
Beth Oprisch, Council-At-Large  
JC Thrash, 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 Whealdon, 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 7:00 pm. President Velas led Council in the Pledge of Allegiance. Members of the public were thanked for their attendance.

**ROLL CALL:**

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	HERE
Jordan	HERE	Thrash	HERE
Lipscomb	HERE	Vincenzo	HERE
Oprisch	HERE		
	Six (6) Present	One (1) Absent	

**MINUTES:** Council President Jim Velas confirmed all Councilmembers received the minutes from the June 20<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting. Councilman Thrash made a motion to approve the minutes from June 20, 2023, Council Meeting; motion seconded by Councilman Smith.

**ROLL CALL:**

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	ABSTAIN	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	ABSTAIN	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Zero (0) NO Two (2) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**CITIZEN HEARING:** None

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**REPORTS:**

**Mayor Kathryn Thalman** read a proclamation acknowledging the work of Wheeling Fellowship Church's Free Bike Depot. The proclamation recognized the Free Bike Depot's positive impact on the community, including improving citizens' health and well-being, boosting community spirit, and reducing pollution and congestion. The Mayor also encouraged citizens of the Ohio Valley to volunteer or donate their used bikes to the Free Bike Depot, which helps those in need of mobility and shares Christ's love. The Mayor expressed gratitude towards those who have already donated their bikes and announced that

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there will be a celebration on the second Saturday, complete with food trucks, bouncy houses, and a DJ. Gift certificates will also be awarded to children who participate in the event.

Mayor Thalman also reported on the 25th anniversary of the National Trail Bikeway and thanked Jen and Roberta for their work in organizing the event. She praised the City crews for making the Bikeway look beautiful. She thanked former Mayor Robert Vincenzo, former service director Dennis Bigler, former landscape director Brian Kralovic, Roxanne Kane, and Council members for attending the service.

The Mayor also thanked local citizens, Mr. John Goodman, and Mr. Halloran, for their fundraising efforts and consultants from ms consultants inc., who shared plans for the tunnel rehabilitation program. Finally, she reminded citizens to have a safe and happy Fourth of July, enjoy public displays, and avoid using personal fireworks. The Mayor also announced that she would attend a leadership conference in Columbus and hopes to bring back ideas to benefit the city.

**Service/Safety Director Jeremy Greenwood** reported on multiple completed and upcoming projects. The West End Distribution project and I-70 Waterline Project are still in progress, with the same contractor for both. The laying of pipes for the I-70 is expected to start on Wednesday, the 5th. A cleaning quote for water tanks is being negotiated, and easements and temporary construction easements for the West End Route 40 water line were discussed. Boring in various areas of the City is complete, and upcoming projects include the rescheduled community days, the replacement of an old HVAC unit in the gym, and the remaining easements for the water distribution project. Contract negotiations with the union are ongoing, and the electric department is busy with summer tasks such as tree trimming and truck maintenance. The water and wastewater department are still experiencing waterline breaks, primarily attributed to the distribution project. The street department is patching potholes and working on culverts and sinkholes. The police department is working on installing a laminar flow hood to increase safety for officers during drug busts. Overall, the departments are busy with various tasks and projects, and a big thank you was given to all workers who helped prepare for the anniversary event for the bike trail.

**Police Chief Matt Arbenz** reported the June stats with 521 calls, two special operations callouts, 15 crashes, 26 arrests, two warrants, three domestics, and 144 traffic stops. Training continues. All shifts are covered, despite vacation time.

**Finance Director Annette Whealdon** expressed gratitude for the support received during her absence due to cancer treatment. She thanked everyone, stating that she was grateful to be alive, and requested that people keep her in their prayers as she still had some radiation and other surgery. She also acknowledged the efforts of Dana and Melanie in keeping the office running while she was away. The State Auditors were scheduled to visit on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, which was delayed due to her surgery.

**Planning & Zoning Administrator Tom Murphy [ABSENT]** No report.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Finance Chair Don Vincenzo** reported that Annette distributed a budget recap which detailed expenditures, with a full budget to follow at year-end. The 40-page financial worksheet for the

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budget was distributed at the last meeting and council members were encouraged to review it and ask questions to prepare for budget approval.

**Utilities Chair Terra Butler [ABSENT]** Councilwoman Oprisch reported that there was a utility committee meeting held this evening. During the meeting, a utility report was reviewed, and a sewer credit was approved.

**Police Chair Mike Smith** No report.

**Streets – North Side Chair Mike Smith** No report.

**Streets – South Side Chair JC Thrash** No report.

**Safety Chair JC Thrash** No report.

**Buildings and Grounds Chair Beth Oprisch** No report.

**Planning Commission Chair Kristi Lipscomb** reported that tonight is the final reading of Ordinance Number 2023-17. It pertains to the 17.56-acre parcel and changes its zoning from office and institution to commercial. She noted speaking to Tom Murphy last Friday; he has had no inquiries or citizen communication regarding this since our public hearing.

**Fire Chair Linda Jordan** No report.

**Recreation Chair Kristi Lipscomb** reported that they rescheduled Community Days to Sunday, July 9th, due to concerns for safety and the event's corporate sponsorship. Eric Gay, who consulted with the board members, made the decision to postpone the event in advance of forecasted inclement weather. The next board meeting will be held on July 20th at 4:30 pm at the rec center.

**Park District Chair Linda Jordan** No report.

**ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS: Law Director Elizabeth Glick**

**FIRST READING**

**ORDINANCE No. 2023-21** – AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT OF LEGAL FEES INCURRED BY INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL MEMBERS UP TO THE AMOUNT OF \$15,000 FOR OUTSIDE REPRESENTATION IN LEGAL MATTERS THAT ARISE FROM THE INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL MEMBER'S EXERCISE OF COUNCIL DUTIES DURING THE REGULAR COURSE OF COUNCIL MEETINGS AND AT ANY OTHER OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED EVENTS AS APPROVED BY COUNCIL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

Councilwoman Jordan asked to see the section of the City's insurance policy where it states it wouldn't cover legal fees for individual council members. She expressed opposition to the legislation burdening citizens with the cost.

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Councilwoman Oprisch noted that she proposed legislation to cover legal fees since insurance won't. Noting as public officials, they aren't covered by insurance. There needs to be a triggering event, such as a lawsuit against the City, for protection to be afforded. Councilwoman Oprisch noted that's why she proposed this.

Councilwoman Jordan said she opposes using taxpayers' money to pay for a council member's individual legal fees and will vote against it.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance No. 2023-21 and that the Ordinance, be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilwoman Lipscomb.

**ROLL CALL:**

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	NO	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Five (5) YES One (1) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

Councilwoman Lipscomb made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2023-21, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Oprisch.

**ROLL CALL:**

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	NO	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Five (5) YES One (1) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

**Resolution No. 2023-22 - A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL PRESIDENT OF THE CITY OF ST. CLAIRSVILLE, OHIO, TO EXECUTE A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL IN FAVOR OF PRESBYTERIAN SENIOR LIVING FOR THE ISSUANCE OF OBLIGATIONS QUALIFIED UNDER THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE (CODE 1954, AS AMENDED AND CODE 1986, AS AMENDED) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Resolution No. 2023-22 and that the Resolution, be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilman Thrash.

**ROLL CALL:**

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
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Jordan	YES	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Six (6) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

Councilwoman Oprisch made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2023-22, the motion was seconded by Councilman Thrash.

**ROLL CALL:**

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	ABSTAIN	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Five (5) YES Zero (0) NO One (1) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

**SECOND READING**

**ORDINANCE No. 2023-20** - A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE COUNTY AUDITOR TO CERTIFY TO THE CITY OF ST. CLAIRSVILLE THE TOTAL CURRENT TAX VALUATION OF THE CITY OF ST. CLAIRSVILLE AND THE DOLLAR AMOUNT OF REVENUE THAT WOULD BE GENERATED BY NINETY-FIVE HUNDREDTHS (0.95) MILL AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion was made by Councilwoman Oprisch that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance No. 2023-20 and that the Ordinance, be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilman Thrash.

**ROLL CALL:**

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Six (6) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

Councilwoman Oprisch made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2023-20, the motion was seconded by Councilman Thrash.

**ROLL CALL:**

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Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Six (6) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

**ORDINANCE No. 2023-19** - AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF ST. CLAIRSVILLE, OHIO FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2024, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

A motion was made by Councilman Thrash that the rules requiring three separate readings be suspended on Ordinance No. 2023-19 and that the Ordinance, be passed on an emergency basis; seconded by Councilwoman Oprisch.

ROLL CALL:

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Six (6) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

Councilman Thrash made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2023-19, the motion was seconded by Councilwoman Oprisch.

ROLL CALL:

Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Six (6) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

**THIRD READING**

**Ordinance No. 2023-17** - AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE ZONING DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION OF A 17.56 ACRE PARCEL OF REAL PROPERTY COMMONLY KNOWN AS 48160 NATIONAL ROAD FROM OFFICE & INSTITUTION DISTRICT (OI) TO COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (C-1)

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Councilwoman Lipscomb made a motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-17, seconded by Councilman Smith

ROLL CALL:


Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	YES	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	YES	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

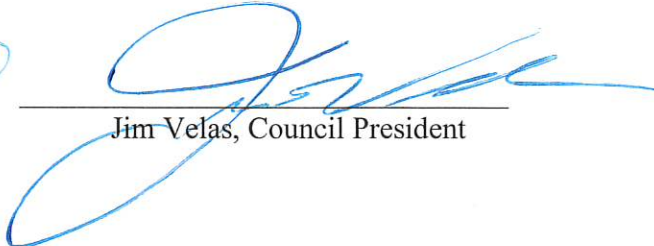
Roll Call Vote: Six (6) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN One (1) ABSENT

Motion Carried

**ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business to come before Council, Councilman Thrash made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilman Smith. The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 P.M.

The next meeting will be Monday, July 17, 2023, at 7:00 P.M. All Councilmembers will be present at the City Building for the next meeting. Members of the public are encouraged to attend the meeting in the Council Chambers.

  
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Jacob DeBertrand, Council Clerk

  
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Jim Velas, Council President