

ST. CLAIRSVILLE CITY COUNCIL
June 20, 2023 Meeting

Jim Velas, Council President
Don Vincenzo, Council, 1st Ward
Kristi Lipscomb, Council, 3rd Ward
Terra Butler, Council, 4th Ward
Linda Jordan, Council-At-Large
Beth Oprisch, Council-At-Large
JC Thrash, Council 2nd 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	ABSENT	Thrash	HERE
Lipscomb	ABSENT	Vincenzo	HERE
Oprisch	HERE		
	Four (4) Present		Three (3) Absent

MINUTES: Council President Jim Velas confirmed all Councilmembers received the minutes from the May 15th Council Meeting. Councilman Thrash made a motion to approve the minutes from May 15, 2023, Council Meeting; motion seconded by Councilwoman Butler.

ROLL CALL:

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

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN Three (3) ABSENT

Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS: None

CITIZEN HEARING: None

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORTS:

Mayor Kathryn Thalman reported that she attended the NAACP picnic and had a wonderful time. The Mayor highlighted some of the history of the National Road Bikeway before making a proclamation. On June 26th, 1998, Mayor Thalman recounted that the National Road Bikeway officially opened, and former Mayor Robert Vincenzo and Public Services Director, Dennis Bigler, led the decade-long effort to make it happen. The National Road Bikeway is unique because of two features: the 532-foot long 40-foot-high rail trail tunnel under US 40 near the center of the Bikeway and the preserved 340-foot-long rail trail trestle over State Route 9. The Ohio Department of Transportation provided funding and multi-modal

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planning experts. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources professionals worked closely with City Officials to preserve the woodlands and wetlands along the main course of the road. Nonprofit organizations and private citizens actively participated in the City's efforts to develop this unique open space. Private businesses contributed towards local matches of grant funding, which led to the creation of various enhancements along the length of the National Road Bikeway. The Mayor proclaimed Monday, June 26th, 2023, National Road Bikeway's 25th anniversary and encouraged citizens and friends to celebrate this enduring city landmark. The Mayor is grateful to everyone who put their time, talents, and visions into putting the Bikeway together.

The Council Clerk read two letters that were addressed to the Mayor from Paula Pollock and Shelly Fortney thanking her for inviting them to the Nation Road Bikeways 25th Anniversary celebration.

Councilwoman Oprisch expressed her appreciation to the administration for handling contract negotiations in-house, which saves a significant amount of money compared to hiring outside attorneys from Columbus. She commends the administration for their efforts, which demonstrates the union's respect for them. However, she would like to know when the current contract will expire.

The Mayor has acknowledged that the Contract will expire on June 30th and needs to be extended. There are a few important matters that need attention, while others are minor or simply require some language clarification. Some issues are still being discussed with the union, but efforts to resolve them have been ongoing since May.

Service/Safety Director Jeremy Greenwood reported on several projects. The sinkhole on North Street has been fixed, but the street needs to be paved. Mr. Greenwood announced that an outside third-party source had evaluated every street in the City. The streets have been ranked based on their condition; the total repair and replacement cost is approximately 3 million dollars. Mr. Greenwood noted that the street rating came in at 63.22, below the typical average of 75 or above. However, considering the number of streets, we are on average. The water department is still working on water nodes as they pop up, and the electric department is relocating lines and poles for the west-end distribution project. The project has been awarded, and negotiations with property owners for easements are going well. Furthermore, Mr. Greenwood reported receiving a quote for cleaning all three water tanks. The I-70 Waterline project has installed the liner, and the contractor will start laying the pipe in the next week or two. The 2024 salt pricing is \$75.58 a ton, down from last year. The water distribution project is ongoing, with construction meeting number two completed, and the boring work in various areas of the town is almost finished. Upcoming projects include the National Road Bikeway anniversary, easements for the water distribution, and working on the bearing for the third screw pump in the sewage plant. Paving has been assessed, and a map has been created to show which streets need to be paved. The engineer is still working on the big sinkhole, and the bypass road, but negotiations with property owners are going well. Lastly, from the recent inspection, Mr. Greenwood shared with the Council drone footage from inside the three water tanks within the City.

Councilman Vincenzo asked what the timeline would be for the completion of the I-70 Waterline Project. Mr. Greenwood estimated it to be complete in about two weeks.

Councilwoman Oprisch asked if the contractors cover the cost of waterline breaks when they are boring and installing the new waterlines. Mr. Greenwood noted that the contractor will cover the costs if a waterline break is caused by them directly boring through a line. etc., but not when breaks occur just from the possibility of ground disturbance during their work.

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Police Chief Matt Arbenz reported that two officers are attending training in Cincinnati, and two others are scheduled for out-of-town training during the summer months. Some of the officers are also on vacation. Chief Arbenz is utilizing part-time officers to cover all the shifts, but the department has successfully managed overtime usage this year. The Chief reported that the department had a successful drone deployment in Bridgeport to locate a missing child. Furthermore, the kinetic breaching tool was used during a SWAT team call-out.

Finance Director Annette Whealdon [ABSENT] No report.

Planning & Zoning Administrator Tom Murphy reminded the Council that the Board of Zoning Appeals would convene next Tuesday, the 27th, at 6:00 PM in the municipal building, and everyone is welcome to attend. He also mentioned the second reading of the rezoning request for the evening. He reported that he has been working with Elizabeth to resolve old utility easements on the Trinity site. They discovered that the existing water and sanitary line easements were drawn up incorrectly in the mid-eighties, so they are working to correct them with the Trinity team. They are also considering adding electricity to the easement, which connects Plaza West to the 17-and-a-half-acre site, and water, sewer, and roadway. He requested counsel's consensus on how they would like new committee appointments handled. He mentioned that he usually sends resumes of new appointees for review the week before, and council members can contact him with any questions. Mr. Murphy requested the Council's guidance on handling this situation to ensure consistency.

Councilwoman Oprisch noted that she believes that it depends on the situation. She may not have any questions if she has enough time to prepare and knows the person and projects well. However, there may be times when she needs more information. It varies depending on the circumstances, but having a resume can be helpful. The Council changes, and people may know different individuals in different situations, so introducing the person and providing background information can be a good starting point. Councilman Smith indicated that he agrees with Councilwoman Oprisch, noting that there are individuals he knows well and is assured that they would be a good fit for the committee. There are others that he doesn't, which would require more information.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Chair Don Vincenzo reported, the City is on track with revenue at 42.964% for the end of May; expenses were 29.778%. The Committee also discussed the Financial Worksheet Budget, which the Council has in front of them. The Finance Committee requests that the council review the budget, as the County needs our approval on a preliminary basis for next year's budget by July 20th. Councilman Vincenzo encouraged Council to review the budget and ask any questions. He noted that the Council can email Annette or come to the Committee and will happily provide answers. Please take the time to review the budget and share your thoughts with us.

Utilities Chair Terra Butler [ABSENT] No report.

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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 announced that the next Building and Ground Committee meeting will be held on July 18th at the city building, starting at three o'clock. At the last meeting, it was decided that the junior sports conversation would also be included as it falls under the building and grounds category. Councilwoman Oprisch shared the City's contract with junior sports in 1988. Section two, paragraph F of the contract mentions that both parties will meet annually during August at an agreed location and at time for a review. Councilwoman Oprisch announced she plans to get the dates from the Service director and the mayor for times in August and include it in the Building and Grounds Committee meeting agenda.

Planning Commission Chair Kristi Lipscomb [ABSENT] No report.

Fire Chair Linda Jordan [ABSENT] No report.

Recreation Chair Kristi Lipscomb [ABSENT] No report.

Park District Chair Linda Jordan [ABSENT] No report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Councilwoman Oprisch made a motion to enter Executive Session under 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; the motion was seconded by Councilman Thrash.

ROLL CALL:

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

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN Three (3) ABSENT

Motion Carried

Executive Session entered at 8:10 pm.

Councilman Smith made a motion to exit Executive Session, seconded by Councilman Thrash

ROLL CALL:

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

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN Three (3) ABSENT

Motion Carried

Executive Session exited at 9:43 pm.

Council President Jim Velas reported that no action was taken in Executive Session.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS: Law Director Elizabeth Glick

FIRST 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

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.

SECOND 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)

THIRD READING

Ordinance No. 2023-15 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 925.01(b) TO ESTABLISH WATER RATES EFFECTIVE AT THE EARLIEST DATE DETERMINED BY LAW

Councilwoman Oprisch made a motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-15, seconded by Councilman Thrash.

ROLL CALL:

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

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN Three (3) ABSENT

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Motion Carried

Ordinance No. 2023-16 - AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 933.02 TO ESTABLISH SEWER RATES EFFECTIVE AT THE EARLIEST DATE DETERMINED BY LAW

Councilwoman Oprisch made a motion to pass Ordinance No. 2023-16, seconded by Councilman Thrash.

ROLL CALL:


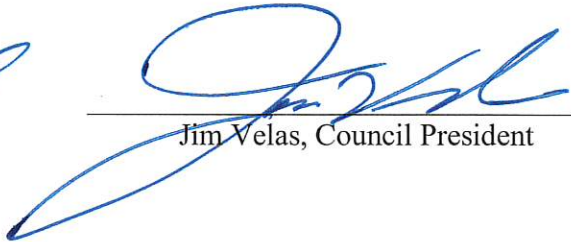
Butler	ABSENT	Smith	YES
Jordan	ABSENT	Thrash	YES
Lipscomb	ABSENT	Vincenzo	YES
Oprisch	YES		

Roll Call Vote: Four (4) YES Zero (0) NO Zero (0) ABSTAIN Three (3) ABSENT

Motion Carried

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to come before Council, Councilwoman Butler made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilman Thrash. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 P.M.

The next meeting will be Monday, July 3, 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.

	
Jacob DeBertrand, Council Clerk	Jim Velas, Council President