

Minutes of City Council
October 20, 2020
Regular Session

The Council of the City of Lewisburg met in regular session on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. in the Paul R Cooley Council Chambers at 942 Washington St West, Lewisburg, WV.

PRESENT: Mayor Beverly White; Recorder Shannon Beatty; Council members, Heather Blake, Josh Edwards, Sarah Elkins, Mark Etten, and Arron Seams; Treasurer Susan Honaker; Interim City Manager Misty Hill; Fire Chief Joseph Thomas; Planning & Zoning Officer Marsha Cunningham, Director of Public Works Roger Pence and Police Chief Chris Teubert.

VISITORS: Reporter Peggy McKenzie with the Mountain Messenger, Bill Frye with the WV Daily News; Jim Morgan, Jr., Anna Saunders with WOAY; Greg Belcher, Greg Johnson, Eric McManamay and Roger Kennedy.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor White called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

VISITORS REPORT:

Jim Morgan, Jr.

Jim Morgan, Jr. approached City Council and stated he wanted to reflect on a meeting held last year in which he presented four questions to City Council. He stated he never got an answer to his questions and stated that he objected to an “amendment to City Council.”

Mayor White thanked Mr. Morgan for his comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

September 15, 2020

Councilmember Seams made a motion to approve the September 15, 2020 regular session minutes as presented. Councilmember Edwards seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Child Loss Remembrance & Awareness Month

Mayor White read a proclamation marking October as Child Loss Remembrance & Awareness Month.

National Arts and Humanities Month

Mayor White read a proclamation celebrating October as National Arts and Humanities Month in Lewisburg.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

Parks Commission appointment

Mayor White offered the name of Brandon Morgan for appointment to a six year term ending on June 30, 2026 to the Parks Commission.

Councilmember Elkins made a motion to appoint Brandon Morgan to a six year term ending on June 30, 2026 to the Parks Commission. Councilmember Edwards seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Mayor White thanked Lewisburg business owners for wearing masks and using hand sanitizer during this Covid-19 pandemic. She noted that even though City Hall was closed to the public from entering the building that it was open for business. She stated customers and citizens can conduct business on the phone, using the Utility payment drop box and emailing. As a special request, Mayor White urged anyone intent on beginning a construction project or opening a business to call City Hall before they begin.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER:

Arts & Humanities grant request, Lewisburg Literary Festival

Greg Johnson with the Lewisburg Literary festival presented an application for an Arts & Humanities grant request in the amount of \$8,000 for speaker fees, transportation and lodging for the 2021 Literary Festival. He stated the festival had been rescheduled to April 17, 2021 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. He stated they were hoping to hold a one day event featuring David Sedaris. Councilmembers questioned whether or not the City had adequate funds in the Hotel Motel tax to give a grant. Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, revenues are down.

Councilmember Elkins recused herself from the discussion because she is a board member of the Lewisburg Literary Festival.

Councilmember Blake made a motion to approve the Arts & Humanities grant request in the amount of \$8,000 from the Lewisburg Literary Festival. Councilmember Seams seconded the motion. With five (5) in favor and one (1) recused (Elkins) the motion carried.

Video Lottery grant request for GEHS soccer field tree

Eric McManamay presented a Video Lottery grant request in the amount of \$10,000 for roofing and decking of a pavilion to be built beside the new soccer field at Greenbrier East High School.

Councilmember Etten noted the City only has \$13,500 budgeted in the Video Lottery fund. He stated this request would deplete the fund. During discussion Councilmembers asked McManamay if they had asked any other cities for funding. He stated they had not but could.

Councilmember Etten made a motion to grant the Video Lottery grant request for the GEHS Soccer field at \$5,000. Councilmember Edwards seconded the motion.

Councilmember Seams stated he would like to see the City fund the request at a lower amount to encourage other cities to contribute and help the effort.

Councilmember Etten amended his motion to approve the Video Lottery grant request for the GEHS Soccer field at \$4,000. Councilmember Edwards seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Route 219 North Sidewalk project bid Phase Two and Three

Roger Kennedy stated the lowest bidder, Tempo Construction decided to pull their bid. Because of that according to the contract they forfeit 5% of their bid. The contract will go to the second

highest bidder Mountaineer Contractors.

Councilmember Seams made a motion to accept the forfeiture of funds from Tempo Construction and to award the contract to the second highest bidder, Mountaineer Contractors. Councilmember Edwards seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Route 219 North Sidewalk project additional grant match for Phase Two and Three

Roger Kennedy with Chapman Technical outlined the Route 219 North Sidewalk project discussing detailed negotiations between the City and the WVDOH concerning bid phase two and three for the project. He stated the project total came to \$156,681 with an 80/20 match of \$31,336. Councilmember Blake offered that she was thrilled that this much needed sidewalk project was going to be completed in the spring.

Councilmember Seams made a motion to commit funds for the Route 219 North Sidewalk Project bid Phase Two and Three for a total cost of \$156,681 with an 80/20 match of \$31,336.23. Councilmember Edwards seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Water Plant Maintenance and repair

Greg Belcher stated that deferral of maintenance and repair issues at the water plant has occurred in an effort simply not to spend money. The City has been planning to renovate the water plant and has been putting off spending money on the current machinery while waiting for upgrades to be made. However, because the City is probably at least two to three years from making upgrades repairs need to be made to the current system. Belcher noted it would probably cost just under \$100,000 to make the repairs that are necessary to keep the system running.

Councilmember Etten noted that rather than approve a blanket amount of money he would like to hold a special session of City Council to approve bids for the repairs. He stated that Council would need time to review bids before approval.

Financial statement review, ending July 31, 2020

Treasurer Honaker presented the financial statements ending July 31, 2020 for review by City Council.

Monthly Report

- Director of Public Works Pence stated that not much activity had been going on the Public Works Department except for in Parks. He stated the City is waiting to complete some storm water and underground electric lines in Stratton Alley behind City Hall. He noted the City was waiting to complete a storm water project on Lee Street before paving could be finished.
- Chapman Technical completed a final walk through on the City Hall roof replacement project.
- City administration met with Chapman Technical and City Attorney Tom White on the new Fire Station survey. Still waiting on the core drilling report to come back.
- Interim City Manager Hill, Zoning Officer Cunningham and City Councilmember Etten had a meeting to go over the Planning Unit Development (PUD).
- Hill had attended several ZOOM calls including Region IV, West Virginia Municipal League, the CARES act and the Water Plant upgrades.
- Several meetings had been held to go over the Route 219 South Sidewalk project.
- The Public Works Department is investigating the possibility of using new locking mechanisms to lock up Parks facility buildings at night to deter vandalism. As well as placing cameras in the parks.
- The City has been working with downtown merchants to extend the holiday season downtown through November, with the kick-off date set for November 7 to have all decorations put up. Hill stated this would give shoppers more time and less urgency to overcrowd shops.
- Councilmembers discussed how to handle winter parades. Hill stated that most of the cities are focusing on Halloween right now. Seams stated he would not like to direct Hill to work on the parades. Seams stated she should not spend time working on planning the parades the way Covid-19 is currently trending with more positive cases. It was noted the City should wait to see how the Covid-19 positive cases were before making any decisions.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS:

No Communications were given.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

Parks Commission Report

Parks Chair Councilmember Sara Elkins reported on the following events of the September 30, 2020 Parks Commission meeting:

- Elkins stated pickle ball was the topic of the Parks Commission meeting. She noted that a group of pickle ball players are seeking to promote, upgrade and fund courts on City

property to serve as pickle ball courts on a permanent basis. She stated the players plan to hold fundraising efforts to clean up the courts.

Planning Commission Report

Zoning Officer Marsha Cunningham reported on the following events of the October 1, 2020 Planning Commission meeting:

- Cunningham stated that building permits have increased in recent months and that she has processed approximately 60-70 each month.
- The city has one possible PUD application on Brush Road.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT:

Greenbrier Ford Vehicle lease for DARE Program

Chief Teubert stated the Police Department would like to lease/purchase a vehicle for the DARE program with DARE graphics on the vehicle as a way to help promote the program. He noted that Greenbrier Ford has a vehicle available.

Councilmember Edwards made a motion to approve the lease/purchase a F-150 for \$20,000 with a three year lease. Councilmember Elkins seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.

Chief Teubert stated the Police Department answered 226 calls for service in September.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Chief Thomas stated the Fire Department had answered 72 emergency calls in September.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Seams made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. Councilmember Elkins seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried.