

February 11, 2020

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Fairmont was held at 7:00 p.m. on the 11th day of February, 2020, at the Public Safety Building located at 500 Quincy Street in Fairmont, West Virginia.

Mayor Merrifield called the meeting to order.

Councilmembers present were:

First District	Joshua D. (Josh) Rice
Second District	Frank G. Yann
Third District	Karl (David) Kennedy
Fourth District	Kenneth (Brad) Merrifield
Fifth District	Barry H. Bledsoe
Seventh District	Philip R. (Phil) Mason
Eighth District	Thomas (Tom) Mainella
Ninth District	Donna M. Blood

Absent:

Sixth District	Dora Kay Grubb
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Also present were:

City Manager	Valerie Means
City Attorney	Kevin Sansalone
City Clerk	Janet L. Keller
Fire Chief	Ed Simmons
Police Chief	Steve Shine

IN RE: COUNCILMEMBER GRUBB EXCUSED

Councilmember Mason moved to excuse Councilmember Grubb from tonight's meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bledsoe.

The Mayor declared Councilmember Grubb excused by voice vote of Council.

IN RE: OPENING CEREMONIES

Rev. Rebecca Minh gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Councilmember Mason.

IN RE: PROCLAMATION PRESENTED – BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The Mayor read and presented a proclamation to Howard Brooks in honor of February 2020 being proclaimed as Black History Month.

IN RE: BOY SCOUT TROOP RECOGNIZED

Mayor Merrifield recognized three boy scouts in the audience from Troop 120. He noted that they are in attendance to receive credit for their merit badge.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Merrifield noted that each member of Council had received a copy of the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on January 28, 2020.

Councilmember Mason moved to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Blood.

The Mayor declared the minutes approved as submitted by voice vote of Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings scheduled for this meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN RE: FAIRMONT CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY

Councilmember Mainella reported that the Fairmont Chamber Music Society will be having a concert this Sunday, February 16th, at 3:00 p.m. at St. Peters Church on Jackson Street. He said tickets will be available at the door and encouraged everyone to attend.

IN RE: FAIRMONT MERCANTILE

Councilmember Mainella stated that he was fortunate enough last Saturday evening to attend a very nice social function at the Fairmont Mercantile and the event was called "Fairmont is for Lovers". He said it was well done and was well attended. He told the public to look for great things to happen there from the Claudio Group.

IN RE: CITY EMPLOYEES COMMENDED

Councilmember Bledsoe stated that he received a phone call from an individual who wanted to thank the City. He said that the water meters are connected to Wi-Fi and can be read instantaneously from the Water Department. They have a method to know if you have a leak that you may not know about. He went on to say that this individual got a phone call and an email from the City saying there is high water usage at this certain address. He said they investigated and found a significant water leak that had they not known it was there, it would have flooded the house and cost them a high water bill. This individual wanted to thank the City for being contacted. He said that we have good people who do a lot of work for this City. He then commended the Water Department and Street Department and all of the employees who work outside in all kinds of weather servicing the City.

IN RE: "NIGHT TO SHINE" AT SOUTHRIDGE CHURCH

The Mayor reported that his son attended the "Night to Shine" at Southridge Church last week and said what a spectacular event. He said this was a first class event for disadvantaged kids and young adults. He then acknowledged those folks for the hard work they put in because it is a tremendous amount of work that goes into the planning of the event.

IN RE: CITY OF FAIRMONT MENTIONED IN NATIONAL WATER PUBLICATION

Councilmember Mainella extended congratulations to Utility Manager David Sago and all of the Water Department employees for an article that was in a National Publication featuring the innovations about the water meters and how it minimized the loss of water and how we are here with our automated water meters.

CITIZENS PETITIONS

IN RE: JOEY GARCIA - CANDIDATE FOR HOUSE OF DELEGATES

JOEY GARCIA, 207 Circle Drive, introduced himself to Council as a candidate for the House of Delegates here in Marion County. He said that his grandfather, Manuel Garcia, was a former Councilmember and Deputy Mayor for the City of Fairmont and his uncle Rob Garcia was a former Councilmember of the 7th District. He then gave a little history on himself

and closed by saying that he was a candidate only to make Fairmont a better place.

IN RE: FOSTER PARENTING

NICCI HAWKINS, Foster Parent Recruiter and OLIVIA MCCORMACK, Foster Care Team Leader, addressed Council regarding their business, Necco, located at 503 Morgantown Avenue. Necco is a successful foster care agency in the State of West Virginia. Their Fairmont location is working towards recruiting and certifying new families in Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, Taylor, and Wetzel counties. They said there is a great need for foster homes in West Virginia, especially now during the ongoing opioid and methamphetamine epidemics. Often times, there are no homes available for children entering foster care, so they are placed in temporary child shelters or a hotel until a home can be found for them. To help alleviate this issue, they are working to find families who may be interested in fostering and fostering-to-adopt. They told Council that they are providing them with a letter in hopes that they or someone they know may be interested in helping them find families.

IN RE: READING CHAPTERS OF THE BIBLE

BENNIE KYLE and TI'ARA KYLE, 139 Bourbon Street, addressed Council regarding an upcoming program of Tree of Life Ministries. Mr. Kyle said that between April 5 and April 12 men, women, and children will read Scriptures from the Bible. He said that each reader will read one chapter and when the reader completes their chapter, another reader will begin. He noted that the reading will continue non-stop for seven days. Mr. Kyle then asked if any Councilmembers would be interested in reading a chapter of the Bible.

Councilmember Bledsoe stated that he would participate and be a reader.

IN RE: POSITIVES IMPACTS ON FAIRMONT

JARRYD POWELL, 952 Coleman Avenue, addressed Council regarding positive impacts that have been happening in Fairmont. He said that the City is making progress. He mentioned the amazing video that has been made about Fairmont in order to promote the City.

IN RE: MOUNTAIN STATE CELEBRATION

MICHAEL BOBICK, 10 Hollen Circle, spoke to Council regarding the upcoming Mountain State Celebration event that will take place in April. In closing, he asked Council to join in the celebration.

IN RE: LETTER PRESENTED TO COUNCIL

ANDREW MILLS, 94 – 4th Street, Carolina, presented a letter to each Councilmember, written by his wife, Ashleigh Mills, regarding certain Councilmember’s remarks on social media. In the letter, she was asking for Councilmembers to think about how their words have an impact and to be cautious as their beliefs have the power to persuade their decision making. Mr. Mills asked Councilmembers to contact him if they would like to talk about the letter he presented to them.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

IN RE: FY21 BUDGET

Ms. Means stated that she was happy to report that we have a balanced budget for FY21 that has been submitted to each Councilmember for their review. She reminded Council of the budget work session scheduled for Tuesday, February 18th starting at 4:00 p.m. She noted that the work session will be held in the Fire Training Room.

IN RE: BIDS FOR EAST SIDE FIRE STATION

The City Manager reported that the bid for the East Side Fire Station has been posted. The bid opening will be held on March 18th.

IN RE: DEMOLITION PROJECT UPDATE

Ms. Means stated that the demolition contractor has completed eight of our 14 buildings that will be coming down. She said this is more clean-up of blighted property.

CONSIDERATION OF COUNCIL BUSINESS

IN RE: INTRODUCTION, FIRST READING, SET PUBLIC HEARING, AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE CITY OF FAIRMONT’S 2019-2020 ANNUAL BUDGET: GENERAL FUND

Mayor Merrifield entertained a motion and second for the introduction of an

ordinance providing for a General Fund Budget Revision.

Motion:

Councilmember Mason moved for the introduction of the proposed ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Rice.

The Clerk read the proposed ordinance by synopsis for the first time.

The Mayor declared the public hearing set for February 25, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor entertained a motion for adjournment.

Motion:

Councilmember Mason moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Rice.

The Mayor declared the meeting adjourned by voice vote of Council at 7:40 p.m.