

May 13, 2020

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Fairmont was held remotely at 7:00 p.m. on the 13th day of May, 2020 due to the COVID-19 Virus.

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
Sixth District	Dora Kay Grubb
Seventh District	Philip R. (Phil) Mason
Eighth District	Thomas (Tom) Mainella
Ninth District	Donna M. Blood

Also present were:

City Manager	Valerie Means
City Attorney	Kevin Sansalone
City Clerk	Janet L. Keller

IN RE: OPENING CEREMONIES

Rev. D.D. Meighen gave the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Councilmember Rice.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mayor Merrifield noted that each member of Council had received a copy of the minutes from the Regular Meeting held on March 24, 2020, the minutes from the Levy Meeting held on April 21, 2020 and the minutes from the Special Meeting also held on April 21, 2020.

Councilmember Bledsoe moved to approve all three sets of minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Yann.

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

IN RE: NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

Mayor Merrifield announced that this week is National Police Week and read a statement from the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. He then acknowledged all of the brave men and women who serve their community and the tremendous sacrifices that all law enforcement officers make for all of us every day.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

No public hearings were scheduled for this meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

IN RE: NEED FOR SPECIAL MEETINGS

Councilmember Kennedy mentioned there may be a need to have more special meetings and/or emergency meetings to meet deadlines since the newspaper office is not publishing newspapers several days a week now. He noted that we have to get the word out to notify the public.

The City Manager replied that we already have the ability to call additional meetings, if needed. We would have to make sure timing is right on that. She said that the City Clerk already brought it to her attention about the newspaper office so we do want to make sure that we keep things timely and get our notices in the newspaper. She noted that we could possibly have to have some in between meetings but we already have the ability to do that now.

IN RE: BIRTHDAY PARADE FOR MELBA HESS

Councilmember Grubb noted that a birthday parade was arranged for Melba Hess who was celebrating her 102nd birthday yesterday. They had planned a large party for her but with the pandemic going on, 53 cars lined up as in a parade and drove past her house to wish her a happy birthday.

IN RE: BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Councilmember Mason noted a child next door was celebrating her 5th birthday and had a sign out in front of her house saying to honk to wish her a happy birthday. He said that a city police officer drove by, honked the horn and turned on the siren and made all kinds of noise to celebrate her birthday. He then commended the police department for their appreciation.

IN RE: NATIONAL POLICE WEEK AND NATIONAL EMS WEEK

Councilmember Bledsoe reported that this week is National Police Week and next week is National EMS Week. He gave a shout out to all of the police, fire and EMS workers because they are the ones that are on the front lines with this virus.

He then said that people that go above and beyond are our IT people, the City Manager and others to get this going. He then said thank you to those that are behind the scenes but yet are making things happen.

CITIZENS PETITIONS

IN RE: CANDIDATE FOR WV SENATE

REBECCA POLIS, 818 Coleman Avenue, introduced herself to Council and stated that she was a candidate for the WV Senate in the primary election to be held on June 9th. She gave information about her background and why she was running for office and asked everyone for their support on June 9th.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

IN RE: CITY DEPARTMENTS COMMENDED

The City Manager commended all city employees for their fantastic and dedicated service during this pandemic. She then thanked all essential workers throughout the community.

IN RE: NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

The Manager paused for a moment to remember all of those who have lost their life in service.

IN RE: RE-OPENING OF CITY OFFICES

Ms. Means talked about her plans for re-opening the city offices since they have been closed to the public since March 19th or 20th. She then thanked all of the citizens for being very patient and for utilizing other means to get work done that they need. She said she is finalizing plans to open offices on a modified schedule and beginning next week through the end of the month she is going to allow walk-in traffic for Code and Permits and Finance and by appointments only for other departments. She noted that she will be sending out the details in a press release by the end of this week. She said that if all goes well, the plan is to open back up by June 1st.

The Manager noted that to date, we still do not have full guidance on fully opening up our parks. She is working with Lloyd White with the Health Department on getting direction from him before opening them up.

IN RE: REVENUE SHORTAGES

Councilmember Mason asked if there is any word or update on revenue shrinkage as a result of the virus.

Ms. Means replied that she did not have any updates on that. However, she reported that a lot of our revenues come in quarterly. She added that we are constantly watching cash flow to make sure that things are fine and as of right now, things are looking ok.

Mayor Merrifield asked if we are waiting on the federal laws to see what is going to be done.

Ms. Means stated that we always want to be conservative and assume we are not going to get the reimbursement. The problem is that a lot of our biggest sources, like the B&O Tax, those come in on a quarterly basis and the last quarter we were presently surprised that we did not have a decrease. We don't know how it is going to impact us. We have come categories that we think are going to be reduced, we have other categories that have gone up. She noted that the Ad Valorem Taxes will not change because properties are still held. We want to be conservative but yet again we don't want to cause a full panic. She said over the next few months we should be able to estimate that better and now that we are opening up and things are starting to flow, we really only had about eight or nine weeks of a decline so that impact will be much less than if this goes on.

Councilmember Mason stated that everyone is worried about revenue shrinkage, not just Council but the citizens as well. He said that he would imagine that the second quarter will be kind of a tough quarter. He said that we won't be surprised if that is the case.

Councilmember Yann asked about the money that the Governor has not released and if that was going to be any benefit to us. He noted that he had understood he was sitting on close to \$1.25 billion dollars.

The City Manager responded by saying that there are federal guidelines that were issued that explained how that money was to be used initially. She said there will be some reimbursements to the City, however, as of right now that money cannot be used to reimburse revenue loss. It is the revenue loss question that we have been most concerned with. We would be able to get reimbursed for things like any additional expenses that we have like for

purchasing protective equipment, sanitizers or anything additional we would have spent including additional overtime. She noted that we are supposed to get guidelines from the Governor's Office either this week or next week that shows the application and how we would go about getting that. She said that the departments have been tracking any kind of additional expenses or additional overtime that have incurred. She said at this time we would not be able to be reimbursed for revenue loss.

CONSIDERATION OF COUNCIL BUSINESS

IN RE: INTRODUCTION, FIRST READING, SET PUBLIC HEARING, AN ORDINANCE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAIRMONT AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING ORDINANCE NO. 1840 DULY ADOPTED NOVEMBER 26, 2019, WHICH ORDINANCE PROVIDES FOR THE CITY OF FAIRMONT'S CURRENT PAY PLAN AND LIST OF OCCUPATIONAL CLASSES FOR ALL CLASS TITLES AND EMPLOYEES, TO ACCOMMODATE CERTAIN CHANGES, NAMELY: A 1 ½ PERCENT BASE PAY INCREASE FOR ALL CLASS TITLES; AN INCREASE IN CERTAIN CERTIFICATION PAY FOR CERTAIN EMPLOYEES; AND AN INCREASE IN THE FIRE PREVENTION AND TRAINING OFFICER SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT PAY; AND PROVIDING FOR CERTIFICATION PAY FOR FIREFIGHTERS WITH A JOINT APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING COMMITTEE CERTIFICATION

Mayor Merrifield entertained a motion and second for the introduction of an ordinance to provide for a new Pay Plan to be effective the first pay period in July, 2020.

Motion:

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

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

The Mayor declared the public hearing set for May 26, 2020.

IN RE: INTRODUCTION, FIRST READING, SET PUBLIC HEARING, AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE RENEWAL OF THAT CERTAIN LETTER OF CREDIT, NO 2001-525, ISSUED BY WESBANCO BANK TO THE CITY OF FAIRMONT FOR PURPOSES OF SATISFYING A PORTION OF THE SELF-INSURED SECURITY AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS OF THE WEST VIRGINIA WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT

Mayor Merrifield entertained a motion and second for the introduction of an ordinance authorizing the renewal of the Letter of Credit issued by WesBanco Bank for the Worker's Compensation Act.

Motion:

Councilmember Mainella moved for the introduction of the proposed ordinance. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Yann.

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

The Mayor declared the public hearing set for May 26, 2020.

IN RE: ADOPTION, A RESOLUTION TO RESCHEDULE THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2020 TO WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10, 2020 DUE TO JUNE 9, 2020 BEING RECOGNIZED AS A LEGAL HOLIDAY

Mayor Merrifield entertained a motion for the adoption of a resolution to change the June 9, 2020 Council meeting to June 10, 2020 due to June 9th being recognized as a legal holiday for the Primary Election.

Councilmember Mainella moved for the adoption of the proposed resolution. Councilmember Blood seconded the motion.

The Clerk read the item by title only.

Roll call was taken by the Clerk.

The Mayor declared the resolution adopted by unanimous vote of Council.

ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor entertained a motion for adjournment.

Motion:

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

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

