

August 23, 2021

Council President Mr. Martin called the August 23, 2021 meeting to order at 7:30 PM. If you aren't a member of council and are on ZOOM please mute your computer so it will cut down the background noise. The roll was called with the following members present: Mrs. Drake, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Gant, Mr. Locke, Mrs. Miller, and Mr. Shutts present. Also, present was Mayor Lorentz, and City Treasurer Mrs. Copeland. Absent from the meeting was Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell, City Auditor Miss Pittenger, City Law Director Mr. Webster and Councilperson Ms. Riffle.

Council President Mr. Martin asked that everyone please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor Lorentz gave the invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Gant made a motion to accept the minutes of August 9, 2021 as presented and bypass the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Reports of City Officials:

Mayor Lorentz reported that we received our project rating for H.B.168. Our project rated no. 6 out of 10. Time will tell as to how much funding Belpre will receive. Council was provided the list of projects and ratings for all.

October 30<sup>th</sup> has been chosen by all the area cities to be Trick or Treat night. It makes sense for us to do likewise. October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

Thank You to Mr. Martin for filling in for me at the Parkersburg Homecoming. The flu bug was running through my home.

We received a retirement notice from one of our employees. As soon as bids come down, we are going to hire as soon as possible. If we are extremely lucky the position may be filled before the employee leaves. This could violate our manpower ordinance but, it also could be worthwhile. Mayor Lorentz stated that if anyone has a problem with this to please let him know.

Safety-Service Director Mrs. Hoblitzell was absent. Mayor Lorentz stated that Mrs. Hoblitzell and David went to Columbus Friday to look at a dump truck. He thought that she filled out a purchase order today.

City Auditor Miss Pittenger was absent. Council President announced that he had signed the reconciliation report for the month of July. It has been placed back on her desk.

City Law Director Mr. Webster was absent, no report was given in his absence.

City Treasurer Mrs. Copeland reported that a copy of the July Treasurer's Report is



before you and is awaiting council approval. Copies are posted on-line and on the back table. Signed copy has been given to the clerk. Mr. Locke made a motion to accept the July Treasurer's Report as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

### **Communications and Petitions:**

Council President Mr. Martin announced that there is a date issue with the fire prevention code that we were going to read this evening. We will put that on hold until the date is fixed the third time. This will not happen this evening

### **Report of Standing Committee:**

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee had no report.

Mr. Gant, Police and Fire Committee had no report. Mr. Gant stated that he had just sent out the agreement for the emergency medical service to all members of council.

Ms. Riffle Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer was absent. No report was given in her absence.

Mrs. Drake, Utilities Committee reported on her two committee meetings. They are as follows:

On Monday August 16, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Drake reported that her committee met to discuss junk cars.

In attendance was Bill Locke, Lee Shutts, Penne Riffle, Judy Drake, Larry Martin and Connie Hoblitzell, SSD.

Purpose of the meeting was to discuss petitions that have been circulated and there are 133 signatures of property owners seeking help in protection of property value.

Property owners were more than willing to sign the petition which referenced Chapter 1321 Nuisance Abatement with the Powers of the Board of Health; Ordinance 1313.12 (b) (1) (2) Inoperable Vehicles; Ordinance 559.01 and .02 Removal of Litter; ORC 4737 Title Chapter 4737 regarding Secondhand Dealers; Junk Yards.

The property owners are well aware that we have a Code Enforcement Officer on staff that absolutely does not enforce our codes to support the upkeep and care of our properties, property values, and this City. With this in mind we went over the above codes and found them to meet the need to be enforced.

Following a good discussion, we agreed that Ordinance 1313.12 Premises Conditions, (b) (1) & (2) Inoperable Vehicles needed to be rephrased for defined clarity and that (3) be dropped. Therefore, this part of the Ordinance is to be amended to read as follows:

(b) Inoperable Vehicles.



(1) No owner or occupant of any residential premises shall allow or be allowed to keep or store inoperable vehicle(s) on the premises for more than sixty (60) days, regardless of the condition or alleged value of said inoperable vehicle(s).

(2) Inoperable is defined as meaning unable to be driven upon a public road or highway for any reason.

(This change combines the old 1 & 2 and old 3 becomes 2)

We ask that this amendment to Ordinance 1313.12 (b) be prepared and to go into effect now.

This is what the committee has recommended to council.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM.

On Monday, August 16, 2021 immediately following the Junk Car Committee Meeting the Utilities Committee met for the purpose of discussing Water Rates for the City of Belpre.

Those in attendance were Bill Locke, Lee Shutts, Penne Riffle, Larry Martin, Judy Drake, Connie Hoblitzell SSD and Mayor Lorentz.

Purpose of meeting was to discuss water rates due to Belpre being out of line with other communities and not in line with MHI to qualify for the 'Water Tank' we are in need of. The need for funding on a new Water Tank is due to poor water pressure that prevents expansion of the city and funding of the increase need on repair/replace of extremely aged water lines. Under present circumstances we can no longer provide water to any additional areas.

This needs to come in line to obtain financial assistance came to light by J. P. Carr, Director of Municipal Engineering. He advised us that our current rates are so low OPWV scoring criteria will not be able to give us funding as needed. In other words, we have to take action to help ourselves to be qualified.

We discussed different ways on raising the monies through our water service and arrived at a 4-year plan by putting into place a Resolution to increase City water bills by \$6.00 now (as soon as Resolution is signed and goes into effect). This will be for next 4 years with the authority of Safety-Service Director oversight. These monies will go into a separate account with \$4.00 designated for the Water Tank and \$2.00 for the water line project.

The Project Costs:

Total \$2,450,000 just for the water tower.

Total Requested Amount:

\$875,000 – HB 168

Project Budget and Match budget including sources:

\$750,000 Community Development Block Grant RPIG (which our current rate precludes)

Match: \$225,000 Local Match (Rates)

\$600,000 APR Match

Therefore, City has to borrow money to meet 'need' and new rates help with payment.

These are the numbers we had to consider to arrive at our decision.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.

Discussion followed regarding water increase. As a point of clarification Mrs. Miller asked if the SSD could raise the rates. Mr. Ferguson stated that the SSD could raise the rates by 4% that had to be agreed upon by the SSD and City Auditor from January 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. Mrs. Drake stated that this is a separate appropriation. Mrs. Miller questioned the fact that the administration has more authority than the council that was voted in by the citizens of Belpre. Mrs. Miller stated that we are in need of the tower.

Mr. Locke stated that it is his understanding from our committee meeting that we are proposing a \$6 increase for the first year. Four dollars would go to Project Water Tank and \$2 dollars would go to fund for infrastructure.

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that he had some concerns from citizens that this would affect the sewer. According to Mayor Lorentz this does not affect the sewer only water. We want to be sure that this gets stipulated so that when the information gets out everyone will know. Our sewer rates are high. We want to be sure this gets publicized.

Mr. Ferguson asked if this could be itemized on our water bill and listed as Water Tank Project.

Mrs. Drake stated that you have to raise your rates so that the city can apply for funding. Our MHI (Minimum Household Income) is so low that we can't apply or qualify for that one grant. At the end of the four-year period council will have to look at that again to see what the status is then.

Mrs. Miller asked by raising the water bill by \$6 for a year how much would that help with the project. Mrs. Drake stated that she didn't have that in front of her. It was figured that it would be approximately \$22,800 per month.

Mr. Null spoke out of turn from the audience and was informed that he needed to ask for permission to speak. Words were minced between the two.



Mrs. Drake also stated that we are part of SOPEC on the Electric Aggregation. Some people's rates have gone up. I don't know whether they are on the aggregation program or not. AEP Energy rate is 5.6.

Mayor Lorentz stated that the rates will go up due to the high temperatures.

Mr. Shutts, Parks and Recreation Committee had no report.

Mr. Locke Planning and Zoning Committee had no report. I expect the legislation will be put together soon on the Zoning Change to C-3 that we discussed earlier this year.

Mr. Locke Economic Development Committee had no report. Mr. Locke stated that SIXMO was suppose to report on Economic Development this evening. Since they were unable to connect to ZOOM hopefully, they will report at the next meeting.

Mr. Locke called a Committee Meeting for September 13, 2021 at 7PM for the purpose of amending the current golf cart legislation to include golf carts.

Mr. Locke informed the clerk to add to the agenda of September 13, 2021.

Mrs. Miller Rules Committee had no report.

**Persons Appearing Before Council – Agenda items only.** None

**Unfinished Business:**

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for third reading **A RESOLUTION SUPPLEMENTING 2021 APPROPRIATIONS.** Mr. Ferguson stated that Exhibit A was dated by Miss Pittenger July 22, 2021. The total amount of \$72,073.00 is the total of the 2021 Supplemental Appropriations. This includes \$50,000 for fire department equipment and supplies and \$22,073.00 is for the Corona Virus Relief. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be Resolution #28, 2020-2021 and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

**NEW BUSINESS:** none

**PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:**

Mr. Gant asked where the funds were going from the sale at the Repo Lot. Mr. Gant asked if the Chief and Miss Pittenger got it all figured out as to where the funds are

going. Mayor Lorentz stated that he didn't know as he hasn't had conversation this week about it.

Mr. Locke stated that Miss Pittenger will be checking with the State Auditor's about changing the legislation to the Police Fund. Mr. Gant stated that when it was first brought up it was supposed to go into the Police Fund. When they had the one sale it went to the General Fund. This wasn't supposed to be.

Mr. Locke made a motion to excuse Ms. Riffle from this evening's meeting. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.


Mr. Gant made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Miller stated that we have a gentleman in the audience that would like to speak. Mr. Gant withdrew his motion.

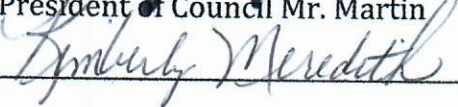
Mr. Null apologized for speaking out of turn. President of Council Mr. Martin informed Mr. Null that he needs to follow protocol.

Reed Byers 205 Locust Street introduced himself to council and announced that he would be running for council. Mr. Byers thanked Mr. Martin for supporting the homecoming and the Healthy Kids Running Series. I'm also running for City Council as a Write-In-Candidate.

### Adjourn

Mr. Gant made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 PM. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

  
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President of Council Mr. Martin

  
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Clerk of Belpre City Council Kimberly Meredith