

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 13, 2018

The regular meeting of the Council for the City of Covington was held on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers of City Hall located at 333 W. Locust Street, Covington, Virginia.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thomas H. Sibold, Jr. The Invocation was given by Rev. Pete Moore followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call of Council showed the following members present: Mayor Sibold, Vice Mayor David S. Crosier, Councilman Raymond C. Hunter and Councilman S. Allan Tucker. Councilwoman Mary Ann Beirne was absent.

City Manager: Richard Douglas
City Attorney: Mark Popovich

CORRECTION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, Council voted to approve the following minutes as presented: Regular Meeting of October 9, 2018 and Called Meeting of October 15, 2018. (No work session was held in October due to the VML Conference.)

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

David Bryant, Director of Finance and HR, presented the monthly financial report which included an explanation of revenues and the improvements to the soft billing process. He also reported on expenditures which included the public works infrastructure improvements, debt service payments and funds that should be set aside for future needs. Following the report, a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve the monthly financial report. Motion carried by aye vote.

REQUESTS, PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Discussion was held regarding the Smith/Dew Tower Lease Agreement. Mayor Sibold expressed his concerns regarding the manner in which this process had been handled and the lack of communication and information to Council. He also noted that no one had spoken to Mr. Dew regarding this process. Vice Mayor Crosier also expressed concerns regarding the process and that better information was needed. He felt that Council needed to be aware of property owners concerns so they could be addressed. Mayor Sibold stated that he hoped that there would be no more surprises on this issue. Following discussion, a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve the Smith/Dew Tower Lease Agreement contingent upon execution of the two agreements previously stated. Motion carried 3 to 1. Mayor Sibold against due to the way the process was handled.

Discussion was held regarding the Special Use Permit for Datapath Tower for public safety communications/commercial tower located at 2000 North Peake Drive, Dry Run. Mayor Sibold expressed concerns for this Special Use Permit due to the upcoming ordinance to be enacted eliminating the renewal requirement for special use permits. Vice Mayor Crosier stated that the City needs to be sure that everything follows through as required. Following discussion, a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve the Special Use Permit for Datapath Tower. Motion carried 4 to 0.

Police Chief Anthony Morgan presented information regarding the reorganization of the Police Department. This included the reduction of number of employees from 34 to 32, salary increases and the work necessary to achieve accreditation. There was much discussion regarding the salary issue and fairness to other employees in the city. Following discussion, a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve the Police Dept. restructuring and salary increases for specific positions for increased responsibility. Motion carried 3 to 1. Mayor Sibold against due to the discrepancy in salary increases.

Discussion was held regarding the penalty for late filing of personal property. Cathy Kimberlin, Commissioner of the Revenue, was present to answer any questions. She noted the efforts made to inform the citizens of the filing deadline and the importance of filing the forms. There was no action taken on this issue.

Council tabled the appointment to the Local Office on Aging Advisory Council.

REPORT OF THE CITY MANAGER

1. Upcoming meetings noted: (1) Christmas Tree Lighting at City Hall on Sun., Nov. 25th at 6:00 p.m.; (2) Reception for Councilwoman Mary Ann Beirne Tues. Dec. 4th at 5:30 p.m. and at 6:30 December work session; (3) Tentative date for Intergovernmental holiday social at Fudge Street Café Thurs. Dec. 6 at 5:30 p.m.; (4) Staff/Council Christmas luncheon at Fudge Street Café Dec. 21st at 12:00 noon; (5) Tentative date for Joint Services Committee meeting Tues. Jan. 22, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.; (6) Date to be determined for Council and staff budget planning session and joint budget session with Alleghany County.
2. Retirement of Delbert Smith (Police Dept.) on Nov. 1st after 20 years of service and Perry Craft (Public Works) on Dec. 1st with 29 years of service.
3. A three-day on-site evaluation of the Police Department operations will begin the initial review for accreditation through the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission. The Police Dept. has also been recognition by SafeWise, as Covington has recently been named as the 18th safest city/town in Virginia for 2018.
4. Appreciation to EMS Coordinator Dwaine Paxton and Police Chief Morgan for implementation of an improved EMS billing process through LifeQuest. Vice Mayor Crosier inquired about possibility of rebilling for previously denied claims. The response was that those items could be rebilled by the new agency. The question was also asked about legal recourse for damaged light poles. The response was that this matter could be pursued to recover costs paid by the City.
5. Mattern & Craig has submitted an application to VDOT for the FY 2020 Local State of Good Repair Bridge Program for rehabilitation of the Rayon Bridge; CHA will be submitting an application to VDOT for the FY 2020 Local State of Good Repair Primary Paving Program for the remainder of Alleghany Ave. Mayor Sibold inquired about the current rating on the Rayon Bridge.
6. Dominion Energy will begin replacing the damaged light poles on East Madison Street; the City will be responsible for the concrete repair.
7. Alleghany County has included Covington in a regional housing study at no cost to the City. The City Manager participated in consultation interviews on October 11th.
8. Covington and Alleghany County will receive a presentation Nov. 28th from two vendors for the shared 911 CAD/records management software; a grant has been awarded from the Virginia Information Technologies Agency for the Next Generation 911 software which provides for texting capability for E-911.
9. Information regarding the 2019 General Reassessment has been provided to Council.
10. On Nov. 6th, the City Manager participated in a regional dinner sponsored by the Roanoke Regional Partnership attended by the Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade and the President of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

Discussion was held regarding Ordinance O-18-12, the revision of the City Code Section 8-3 to eliminate the renewal requirement for Special Use Permits. Council expressed concerns regarding the elimination of the renewal of the Special Use Permits and if this could create spot

zoning situations. It was noted that if the use designated in the permit is not being carried out, Council still has the legal right of review and action. Following discussion, a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve, on first reading, Ordinance O-18-12 regarding elimination of the renewal of Special Use Permits. Motion carried 4 to 0. Mayor Sibold – FOR; Vice Mayor Crosier – FOR; Councilman Hunter – FOR; Councilman Tucker – FOR. Councilwoman Beirne Absent.

Discussion was held regarding Ordinance O-18-13 regarding revision of City Code Appendix B, Zoning, Light Industry (M-1) Sec. 7, to change the setback regulations by reducing it to 25 feet. Mayor Sibold expressed concerns regarding how this would affect Main Street and that this new setback could create a problem. Following discussion, a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve, on first reading, Ordinance O-18-13 reducing the setback regulations to 25 feet. (Previously 50 feet). Motion carried 4 to 0. Mayor Sibold – FOR; Vice Mayor Crosier – FOR; Councilman Hunter – FOR; Councilman Tucker – FOR. Councilwoman Beirne Absent.

Discussion was held regarding Resolution R-18-46 allowing for a Blanket Funding Commitment and for Blanket Signature Authority for VDOT projects approved by Council. Following discussion a motion was made by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Tucker, to approve Resolution R-18-46. Motion carried 4 to 0. Mayor Sibold – FOR; Vice Mayor Crosier – FOR; Councilman Hunter – FOR; Councilman Tucker – FOR. Councilwoman Beirne Absent.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Sibold: Expressed concerns regarding the method being used to bill a current customer with years of responsible payments, who desires to put their name on another water account. He feels that the \$203 payment required is unfair. Mr. Bryant responded that an ordinance change would be needed. Vice Mayor Crosier also felt that work needs to be done to provide a better method to address these issues.

Vice Mayor Crosier: Suggested Council schedule a meeting to discuss issues such as the water billing policy and others.

CITIZEN COMMENTS


Josh Haynes inquired about the Special Use Permits, raises for employees and the fence on the property on Edgemont Drive. Mr. Douglas responded that the owner of the property on Edgemont Drive has filed an insurance claim regarding the fence.

CLOSED SESSION

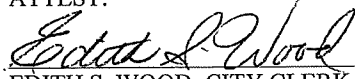
Upon a motion by Vice Mayor Crosier, seconded by Mr. Hunter, Council voted to move into closed session pursuant to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act Sec. 2.2-3711 A. 3 regarding real property and A. 1 regarding Council appointed personnel.

Following the closed session, Council reconvened and voted to certify that only the matters stated were discussed. Not action taken at this time.

No further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned.


THOMAS H. SIBOLD, JR., MAYOR
PRESIDENT OF THE CITY COUNCIL AND, AS SUCH,
EX-OFFICIO OFFICER OF THE CITY OF COVINGTON,
VIRGINIA

ATTEST:


EDITH S. WOOD, CITY CLERK