

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED AT 6:30 PM ON JANUARY 26, 2021 IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE BECKLEY CITY HALL.

THOSE PRESENT: Mayor Robert R. Rappold, Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump, Secretary Susan Miller, Bill Kelly, Director of IT, Amy Evans, Assistant Director of IT and Leslie Baker, Director of Parks & Recreation.

THOSE PRESENT BY WEBEX: Guests: April Elkins-Batke and Zach Foster with the Appalachian Conservation Corps, City Attorney, Mr. File, Council Members: Tom Sopher, Robert Dunlap, Kevin Price, Janine Bullock, Michael Reedy, Bob Canter, Police Chief Lonnie Christian, Director of Board of Public Works Jerry Stump, Captain of Fire Department, Ernie Parson .

THOSE ABSENT: Councilwoman Hunter, Robert Cannon and Chief of Fire Department, Ed Wills.

The Mayor called the meeting to order. Because of the ongoing concerns of the coronavirus, and the health and safety of the Council Members, the City of Beckley employees, as well as the public, this regular Council meeting for January 26, 2021 is being held via WebEx Event. The public will have access to join the meeting either from their computer, or by phone, using the weblink or phone number provided the day of the meeting on the city's webpage at Beckley.org or the city's Facebook page.

The Mayor reminded the public that they will be able to make comments when invited to do so by either pressing *3 on their phone and their call will be taken in the order it is received, or if viewing by computer or tablet, raising your hand by right clicking your name and choosing "Raise Hand".

Council dispensed with the reading of the minutes of the regular Council meeting dated January 12, 2021, copies of which were distributed to each member. Council unanimously approved the minutes as written on a motion by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilwoman Bullock.

The Mayor introduced April Elkins-Badtke and Zach Foster with the Appalachian Conservation Corps. April gave a brief introduction about the Appalachian Conservation Corps and Zach elaborated on it. The Appalachian Conservation Corps (A.C.C.) is a national program that works with young adults between the ages of 16 -18. They are seeking municipal support to team up with the City of Beckley while attracting more young adults to join the work force in our community. The A.C.C. assumes all screening, workman's compensation, insurance and other areas of training and liability for the young adults. The A.C.C. needs \$25,000.00 for funding to reach their goal. The A.C.C. is in Robert Dunlap's building on Prince Street. Councilman Sopher & Councilwoman Bullock asked questions. Mr. Foster clarified the program by stating that the A.C.C. has local recruiters that work with local schools, church groups, etc. The A.C.C. requires references and the applicants undergo background checks and their schedule runs congruent with the school calendar. They operate in crews of eight which is comprised of two crew leaders and six participants. The crews work on trails and other community projects. They earn a wage of \$10.00/hr. Councilman Price said that he thinks the Trail of Lions is a great opportunity for the young adults. The Mayor asked Council to consider the City making a contribution to the A.C.C. This matter will be discussed at a future meeting. Ms. Badtke stated that this introduces the young adults to a life of conservation. The Mayor invited them to attend a future Council meeting and thanked them for attending tonight's meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: The Mayor congratulated Janine Bullock for her 2021 NAACP Living Legend Award. The Mayor informed Council that seven Probationary Police Officers were sworn in January 25, 2021. Chief Christian stated that he is happy to get them started. The Mayor updated Council on the traffic light situation uptown. He acknowledged the amount of time that this project has taken. The Mayor asked Jerry Stump, Director of Board of Public Works, to update Council on the meeting he had today with SGI. Jerry stated that most of the underground work is completed. Some of the poles and cabinets are now in stock, and they are waiting on more to arrive. They hope to start pole installation in approximately two weeks.

A representative from the power company was at the meeting with Jerry Stump and SGI. A new meter base will have to be installed. The power changes will take approximately one week then the concrete work will have to be completed. Councilman Sopher asked Jerry about the concrete they are going to pour around the intersections. Mr. Stump stated that it will be finished with joints and concrete to meet ADA standards. The poles also must be ADA compatible.

The Mayor stated that Councilman Price, had mentioned earlier the Mountain State Trail Alliance memo that Recorder-Treasurer, Billie Trump circulated to Council. They think that the City will be involved in this alliance and that it is a very exciting long-range plan and will help with the ultimate goal of connecting Beckley with Fayetteville. The Mayor stated that the timing is wonderful. The New River Gorge is now a National Park. The Mayor stated that Bill Wells has been a member of several different boards working with trails, including bicycle friendly trails. Bill Wells and Gary Moorefield have worked very closely together on trail development.

The Mayor stated earlier today that he circulated a photo of New River Drive illustrating the significant amount of water that flows through that channel and through that small creek. Today there was almost two inches of rain there in a twenty-four-hour period. Currently, the box culverts are not open for full use. He said the New River Drive Project is a much larger project than might be widely known.

Councilwoman Bullock thanked the Raleigh County branch of the NAACP for presenting her with the 2021 Living Legend Award. She also thanked everyone for their congratulatory remarks. She stated that the Raleigh County Mobile Food Pantry will be at the Epling Stadium Wednesday from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. COVID-19 testing will be at East Park at the Multicultural Center Wednesday from noon to 6:00 p.m., and Thursday and Saturday from noon until 6:00 p.m. at Heart of God Ministries. The Mayor thanked Councilwoman Bullock for all she does for the community.

NEW BUSINESS: With no new business to discuss, the Mayor moved to public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: With no public comments, the Mayor asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Councilman Price made the motion and Councilwoman Bullock seconded.

Mayor

Recorder-Treasurer