

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED AT 6:30 PM ON MARCH 23, 2021 IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF BECKLEY CITY HALL.

THOSE PRESENT: Mayor Robert R. Rappold, Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump, City Attorney, Mr. File, Secretary Susan Miller, Bill Kelly, Director of IT, Amy Evans, Assistant Director of IT.

THOSE PRESENT BY WEBEX: Council Members: Tom Sopher, Robert Dunlap, Robert Canter, Kevin Price, Janine Bullock, Sherrie Hunter and Michael Reedy, Police Chief Lonnie Christian, Donnie Morgan with Code Enforcement, Director of Board of Public Works Jerry Stump, and Chief of Fire Department, Ed Wills, Nick Akers, Engineer, and Dr. Kristi Dumas of the Beckley Rotary Club.

THOSE ABSENT: Robert Cannon.

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 March 23, 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 March 23, 2021, copies of which were distributed to each member. Council unanimously approved the minutes as written on a motion by Councilman Sopher and seconded by Councilwoman Price. CORRECTION: Councilman Price - - SM

The Mayor opened and read demolition bids from two contractors to demolish a building at 227 Prince Street (the Old Prince Medical Lab building) and a building at 107 Earwood Street in Beckley. The first bid was from Empire Salvage & Recycling, Inc. Demolition for the Prince Street location was \$54,800.00. Asbestos abatement is an additional \$7,200.00 for a grand total of \$62,000. Empire's bid for the demolition at 107 Earwood Street is \$18,000 and \$11,594.00 for asbestos abatement with the total bid being \$29,594.00. The bid includes asbestos abatement, from Reclaim Company LLC their total for demolition of the 227 Prince Street location is \$172,800.00. Empire's total bid for the 107 Earwood Street building is \$55,548.00. The Mayor stated that these bids will be turned over to Councilmembers at Large, Jerry Stump and Billie Trump for review and possible award at a future meeting. Councilman Dunlap asked if the demolitions had previously been an agenda item. He stated that this is the first that he has heard of the proposed demolition of 227 Prince Street. The Mayor explained that Council had been apprised of and when all of the buildings in downtown Beckley were assessed. This building, in particular, was deemed too dangerous to enter for assessment so the City secured the building and it was decided this would be one of the first buildings to come down. Councilman Dunlap said that he would like to be a part of these discussions in the future, and he realizes that this demolition decision took place before he became a Council Member.

Next, Mr. File summarized an ordinance titled THE ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BECKLEY TO PURCHASE FROM CHURCH OF GOD OF AMERICA REAL ESTATE LOCATED AT 116 AND 118 11TH STREET (LOTS 7,8, AND 9 BLOCK 15 CENTRAL ADDITION) BECKLEY, RALEIGH COUNTY, WV. Mr. File read the ordinance by title and conducted a public hearing. There were no public comments. Councilwoman Hunter made the motion to approve the Ordinance and Councilwoman Bullock seconded it. The ordinance was unanimously approved by Council and is incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Mr. File summarized and read by title AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE AMENDMENT TO THE TRAFFIC CONTROL MAP – OTHER THAN PARKING AND TRAFFIC CONTROL FILE AUTHORIZING THE LOCATION AND CONSTRUCTION OF AN ENTRANCE ROAD CONNECTING THE CALVARY ASSEMBLY OF GOD CHURCH PARKING LOT TO HARPER ROAD AND CONNECTING WITH RESERVATION AVENUE. Mr. File conducted a public hearing. No public comments were made. Nick Akers, Engineer for the church was available for any questions. The public meeting was closed. Councilman Sopher asked if the church will continue to own it and will it be open to the public. Mr. File answered that the church will own it and it will be open to the public. The City may scrape it of snow. Councilman Reedy made a motion to accept the Ordinance and Councilman Reedy seconded it. The Ordinance was unanimously approved by Council and is incorporated into these minutes.

Next, on behalf of The Beckley Rotary Club, Dr. Kristi Dumas recognized and thanked two female Council Members, Councilwoman Hunter and Councilwoman Bullock for their public service. Both Councilwomen thanked the Beckley Rotary Club as well as Dr. Dumas for their acknowledgment and appreciation.

OLD BUSINESS: The Mayor thanked Eppy's Drug Store for the COVID-19 vaccinations administered to the employees of the City. The Mayor complimented Eppy's Drug Store on the beautiful expansion of their store. The Mayor also thanked New River Health Organization in Scarbro for their help in vaccinating our Beckley Sanitary Board employees at our Piney Creek sewage plant location. The Mayor also thanked Mr. John Johnson for all his help in getting City employees vaccinated. Mayor announced that New River Drive is up and running and looks great. The Mayor thanked Dr. Dumas and Vicky Webb for their initiative for Community Gardens in an effort to provide healthy vegetables for those in need. The Mayor also thanked Donna Whitt, Executive Director of Beckley Housing Authority, who, through the USDA, was able to have several healthy boxes of food delivered to Beckley. He also thanked Councilwoman Hunter and former Commissioner Ron Hedrick for their efforts in coordinating the volunteers for this distribution. Councilwoman Hunter acknowledged Lt. Chris Graham who was named Firefighter of The Year. She congratulated him, as this is the second time that he has received this award. Another mobile food pantry will be arriving with 350 – 400 boxes of food from Mountaineer Food Bank Wednesday March 24, 2021 at Epling Stadium from 11 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. There will be another food pantry through Donna Whitt's efforts for Save The Children in April. The Mayor mentioned that our Recorder-Treasurer is a former recipient of the Firefighter of The Year award. Councilwoman Bullock complimented Vicky Webb and Dr. Dumas, as it is International Women's' History Month, for all they do.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business to discuss.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Daniele Stewart, Chairperson of the Beckley Human Rights Commission, addressed City Council about the C.R.O.W.N. Act. He asked Council to amend the City's Human Rights Ordinance to add protections for and ban discrimination against individuals based on ethnic hair. Dr. Dumas also spoke asking Council to pass the C.R.O.W.N. Act. With there being no other public comments, the Mayor asked for a motion to adjourn which was made by Councilwoman Hunter and seconded by Councilwoman Bullock. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Mayor

Recorder-Treasurer