

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED
AT 6:30 PM ON MARCH 28, 2023, IN COUNCIL
CHAMBERS AND VIA WEB-X.

PRESENT: Mayor Robert R. Rappold, Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump, City Attorney Bill File, and Secretary Susan Miller. Council Members: Janine Bullock, Robert Canter, Robert Dunlap, Cody Reedy, Tom Sopher, and Kevin Price. The following Department Heads were present: Director of IT William Kelly, Assistant Director of IT Amy Evans, Anthony Martin (IT), Captain Coughlin with BFD, Director of Board of Public Works (BPW) Pam Frey, Chief Code Enforcement Officer Donald Morgan, Chief of BPD Dean Bailey. ABSENT: Councilwoman Hunter.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The public had the option to join the meeting either in person or by WEB-X 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 led the Pledge of Allegiance. Council dispensed with the reading and approval of minutes from the City Council meeting dated March 14, 2023, copies of which had been distributed to each member. Council unanimously approved the minutes as written on a motion by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilman Sopher.

Next, City Attorney Mr. File read a Resolution by title, Resolution Approving The 2023 Project List Submission For The Region 1 Planning & Development Council Comprehensive Economic

Development Strategy, March 2023. He explained the Resolution and stated Council has had an opportunity to review a list of projects. The resolution was unanimously approved by Council on a motion made by Councilman Sopher and seconded by Councilman Dunlap. The resolution is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Mr. File explained that a motion is necessary confirming the requirement for bids be waived by Council regarding the emergency purchase of six vehicles for the Beckley Police Department. It has not been possible to complete the bid process because the vehicles are being purchased by other buyers before the bid process can be completed. Mr. File stated that the City of Beckley is not the only city having difficulty finding replacement vehicles. The vehicles currently being used by the Police Department are in poor condition and becoming a danger to the officers driving the vehicles and therefore a danger to the public. The motion was unanimously approved by Council after a motion was made by Councilman Dunlap and seconded by Councilman Reedy. Attached are supporting emails submitted by Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump.

Next, Captain Coughlin with the Beckley Fire Department explained that fire trucks have approximately a twenty-year life cycle and the oldest fire truck at the BFD is approaching twenty years. Captain Coughlin explained that the bidding process, at best, takes a year and the price changes. Mr. Trump explained that a new truck has been ordered and will be paid

for by the fire levy and ARPA funds. The City does not have to pay for the fire truck. Mr. Trump explained that the City is part of a buying cooperative, Sourcewell. The City is included in the bid Sourcewell created. Mr. Trump said there is a five – seven percent discount over the ordered price of the truck. The sales staff informed Mr. Trump that it could take twenty-four to thirty months to receive a truck. The truck that is approaching twenty years old will be moved into a reserve status because maintenance is becoming an issue. Councilman Sopher asked what the price of the truck is. Mr. Trump said it is approximately one million dollars. Councilman Price said in the past, several were purchased through the fire levy and the price continued to increase along with availability being a challenge. Councilman Dunlap said there is no price tag for safety considering how close houses are in the City. The motion to approve the purchase was made by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilman Sopher and was unanimously approved by Council. Attached are supporting emails submitted by Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump.

OLD BUSINESS: The Mayor thanked Councilwoman Bullock for her efforts and the efforts of the City's grant writers. The City received a grant in support of placing Hunter Cemetery on the National Registry for Historic Places. Councilwoman Bullock thanked Mr. Trump and Angela King for their help in

writing and submitting the grant. The Mayor reminded Council of the Chamber of Commerce Dinner Thursday, March 30th at 5:30 p.m. honoring Donnie Holcomb. Mr. Holcomb is the recipient of the 2023 Community Leadership Award. The grand opening of the new Raleigh County Sheriff's office is Friday, March 31st at 11:00 a.m. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held for Z & Z Beauty located at 223 Prince Street, Friday, March 31st at 2:00 p.m. A ribbon cutting ceremony for Vinyl Tracks, LLC. is Friday, March 31st at 3:00 p.m. located at 345 Prince Street. Five new Beckley Police Officers took the oath today led by Chief Bailey. The City received the report from Thrasher regarding Stiffler Drive and a Workshop for the residents on Stiffler Drive will be scheduled soon. Councilman Dunlap asked Chief Bailey if the parking issue on Woodlawn Avenue was addressed. Chief Bailey said yes. The Mayor said this is a complicated matter and can be discussed further if necessary.

NEW BUSINESS: Councilwoman Bullock thanked Delegate Eric Brooks District 45, for attending the meeting. Councilman Sopher said he would like to

see Kameron Lawson, who is employed at Walmart and a contestant on American Idol, receive support from the City.

Councilman Sopher thanked Board of Public Works (BPW) for all the work they do for spring clean-up in the City.

Councilman Sopher said there is one house on Kanawha Street that has an excessive number of bags to be picked up. He thinks there should be a limit.

Director of Board of Public Works Pam Frey said they will pick up from that location between runs until they get all of the bags. Councilwoman Bullock asked Chief Bailey about the basketball game the City played against the Raleigh County Sheriff's Department. Chief said the City's Police Department won the game. It was for charity, helping supply school supplies to kids in need at Maxwell Hill Elementary.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mary West shared her concerns regarding drivers speeding on Larew Avenue. She suggested getting children involved to help paint fire hydrants. She said trees need cut down and removed from that area. Ms. West asked what happened to the speed bumps that used to be in that area. She said the speed bumps need to

be put back. She said there is a lot of trash at a neighbor's house that needs addressed. The Mayor said he spends a lot of time observing Larew Avenue and does not see drivers speeding when he is there. He thinks the property is very well kept apart from items being out at this time for spring cleanup. Chief Bailey said several radar patrols have been conducted there and haven't observed drivers speeding in excess of three to four miles over the speed limit, if any. Chief Bailey said Larew Avenue is a regular part of the patrol. Jody Lovelace Patrick inquired about an update on Stiffler Drive. The Mayor suggested the City briefly update her and schedule a Workshop with the residents of Stiffler Drive. Mr. File explained that the City received a preliminary report from Thrasher including a preliminary cost estimate. Mr. File said there are several alternatives according to the report from Thrasher. Mr. File said he would be glad to give her a copy of the report after the meeting. Mr. File said during a future Council Workshop, options suggested by Thrasher will be discussed. Councilman Dunlap said this is important because the residents will know what they will need in

order to bring the street up to compliance.

Councilman Dunlap apologized that it took so long to receive the report. The Mayor asked Anthony in IT if anyone is signed up online to make a public comment. The Mayor announced if calling in by phone: dial *3 to raise your hand, if connected by computer: click the “hand icon” on your participants panel to speak. There were no comments.

Councilman Dunlap said that if Mr. Shane Pierce is listening, he wants him to know what a great job he does with the theatre in the City. With there being no further comments, Councilman Dunlap made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Councilman Sopher. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Mayor

Recorder-Treasurer