

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED
AT 6:34 PM ON APRIL 11, 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, Director of Parks and Recreation Leslie Baker, and Director of Outdoor Economic Development Corey Lilly. ABSENT: Councilwoman Hunter.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:34 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 28, 2023, copies of which had been distributed to each member. Council unanimously approved the minutes as written on a motion by Councilman Sopher and seconded by Councilman Dunlap.

Council unanimously approved the minutes from the Workshop held April 4, 2023, on a motion by Councilwoman

Bullock and seconded by Councilman

Dunlap.

Next, Director of Outdoor Economic

Development (DOED) Corey Lilly and

City Attorney Mr. File summarized the

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

between The West Virginia Land Trust,

Inc., (WVLT) and the City of Beckley

(COB). The MOU is a recognition that

the WVLT and the COB have mutual

interests in protecting and managing the

Piney Creek Preserve and Recreation

Area. The MOU acts as a mechanism to

formalize and define the relationship

between the WVLT and COB to develop

and manage the Piney Creek Preserve and

Recreation Area. Each Council member

received a copy of the MOU prior to the

Council meeting. The Mayor asked if any

Council member had questions regarding

the MOU. There were no questions. The

MOU was unanimously approved by

Council on a motion by Councilman Price

and seconded by Councilwoman Bullock.

The MOU is hereby incorporated into

these minutes.

Next was the second reading and public hearing of an Ordinance Amending Zoning of Property on Central Avenue from “M” Manufacturing, to “B-1”, Neighborhood Highway Business District. Mr. File read the ordinance by title, An Ordinance Amending The City Of Beckley Zoning Ordinance Of 1971 And The Comprehensive Plan Of The City Of Beckley And The Zone Map Of

The City Of Beckley, As From Time To Time Has Been Amended, To Provide For The Re-zoning Of Seven (7) Parcels On Central Avenue And One (1) Parcel On Virginia Street, All In The City Of Beckley, Raleigh County, WV, Including Parcels 33, 34, 37, 38, 40, And 41 As Shown On Beckley Corporation Tax Map 29, And Parcels 272 and 272.1 As Shown On Beckley Corporation Tax Map 30, From “M,” Manufacturing District , To “B-1,” Neighborhood-Highway Business District. Mr. File opened the public hearing. Danielle Stewart spoke in favor of the ordinance. 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. There were no public comments by phone or online. Mr. Brian Brown, the developer, announced that the name of his upcoming development will be “The District.” He introduced investors and support staff. The Mayor commended Mr. Brown for his hard work and congratulated him on the upcoming development of “The District.” There were no other comments. Mr. File closed the public hearing. The ordinance was unanimously approved by Council on a

motion made by Councilman Reedy and
seconded by Councilwoman Bullock.

The ordinance is hereby incorporated into
these minutes.

Next, for Council's edification, Chief

Code Enforcement Officer Donald

Morgan read a WVABCA application for

Kumo Japan. The notice of application is

hereby incorporated into these minutes.

OLD BUSINESS: The Mayor thanked Beckley Police Department for providing police escort services for the procession for the former first lady, Lynn Smith O'Brien, and he complimented the employees at Black Knight for the luncheon that followed Mrs. O'Brien's services. Councilwoman Bullock asked the Mayor when the workshop regarding Stiffler Drive will be. He asked Mr. File if he has a date for this workshop and a date for a workshop regarding the City Manager form of government. Mr. File said the workshops should be scheduled within the next two – three weeks.

Councilwoman Bullock expressed her condolences for the recent loss of Mr. Brown's aunt. She congratulated him on the upcoming development of "The District."

NEW BUSINESS: There was no new business to discuss.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 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. Anthony Martin (IT) said no one signed up online or by phone to make public comments. Mary West shared her concerns regarding drivers speeding on Larew Avenue. The Mayor said he has spent a lot of time observing Larew Avenue and does not witness drivers speeding or running stop signs. The Mayor asked Chief Bailey if radar patrols show evidence of speeding in this area. Chief Bailey said no. Pam Upton listed her name for public comments. When the Mayor asked her if she would like to speak, she said no thank you. Brian Brown said he hopes the City does not decide to implement the City Manager form of government. He would like to see the City be involved with the Raleigh County Board of Education to make them

responsive to the threats happening in schools, gun violence, and to improve safety in schools. Mr. Brown offered his help regarding the shortage of lifeguards. Next, Mr. Jesse Cecil (Operations Manager) with The West Virginia Land Trust submitted a petition for annexation for the Piney Creek Preserve to be inside City boundaries. Mr. Cecil said he submitted the documents to Mr. File regarding this annexation. Mr. File said the City does not have a definite timetable as to when the annexation may take place. Councilman Dunlap asked the Mayor if he has had any communication with Frontier regarding the phone outage. The Mayor said the only information that he received is when he stopped and talked to Frontier employees working to restore service and they could not give him an estimated time of restoration. Councilman Dunlap said any support the Mayor could lend it an effort to speed up the process is appreciated. The Mayor said that the workshop regarding the City Manager form of government will be open to the public. He hopes those with questions/concerns can attend. He said notice of the workshop will be posted at least seventy-two hours in advance. Mr.

Brown repeated his opposition to changing the form of government from strong Mayor to City Manager.

Next, Mr. File, pursuant to WV Code 6-9A-1 et. seq. Attorney-Client Privilege regarding a legal issue, asked for a motion for Council to enter into Executive Session. Council unanimously approved the motion made by Councilman Dunlap and seconded by Councilman Price for Council to enter into Executive Session at 7:04 p.m. A motion made by Councilman Dunlap and seconded by Councilwoman Bullock was unanimously approved to exit Executive Session and reconvene the regular meeting at 7:18 p.m.

The Mayor announced no decisions were made and no votes taken while in Executive Session. With there being no further comments, Council unanimously approved a motion to adjourn which was made by Councilman Dunlap and seconded by Councilman Sopher. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Mayor

Recorder-Treasurer