

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED
AT 6:30 PM ON JUNE 27, 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, Sherrie Hunter, Cody Reedy, Tom Sopher, and Kevin Price. The following Department Heads were present: Director of IT Bill Kelly, Anthony Martin (IT), Chief Wills of BFD, Director of Board of Public Works (BPW) Pam Frey, Chief Code Enforcement Officer Donald Morgan and Chief of BPD Dean Bailey.

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.

Council dispensed with the reading of minutes from the City Council meeting dated June 13, 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 Dunlap.

Next, the award of bid to Vance Outdoors, Inc., for sixty (60) policy duty handguns in the amount of \$46,320.00 was unanimously approved by Council on a motion by Councilwoman Hunter and seconded by Councilman Reedy. The bid is incorporated into these minutes.

Next, the award of bid to Frye Roofing
for the replacement/repair of the roof on
The Historic Black Knight in the amount
of \$153,600.00 and a warranty for
\$3,600.00 was approved. Council
unanimously approved the bid on a

motion by Councilman Reedy, seconded
by Councilwoman Hunter. The bid is
incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Councilwoman Hunter introduced Coach George Barbera, the girls' track and field coach at Woodrow Wilson High School. Councilwoman Hunter presented a Certificate of Achievement to Bella Staples for earning the 2023 State Championship in discus throwing with a throw of 131'1" ranking her seventh on the all-time list for AAA and 13th on the all-time list for all classes in the 48-year history of WV women's high school track and field. Councilwoman Bullock congratulated Bella's mother for her promotion at her job at the local Federal Prison.

Next, the Employee Longevity Resolution was summarized by City Attorney Mr. File. Mr. File read each of the Resolution's paragraphs that set forth the pay increases. Recorder Treasurer Billie Trump said the City allowed for the longevity increase for each department in the City's budget if Council approves the longevity increases tonight. The Mayor said that sometimes this increase is not acknowledged and recalls times when the City was not financially able to offer the increase. This year the City is able to

offer the increase and is happy to do so when it can. The Employee Longevity Resolution was unanimously approved by Council on a motion by Councilman Price, seconded by Councilwoman Hunter and is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Mr. File summarized the Bank Depository Resolution and read paragraph number four. The Bank Depository Resolution was unanimously approved by Council on a motion by Councilman Sopher, seconded by Councilwoman Hunter and is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Council unanimously approved the reappointment of Dr. Marcia Khalil to a five-year term serving on the Board of Directors for the Beckley-Raleigh County Health Department on a motion by Councilwoman Hunter, seconded by Councilman Sopher. Next, Council unanimously approved the reappointment of John Sadowski to a three-year term serving on the Board of Directors for the Beckley Sanitary Board on a motion by Councilman Price, seconded by Councilwoman Bullock.

Next, Council unanimously approved the reappointment of Dr. Kristi Williams Dumas to a three-year term serving on the Human Rights Commission on a motion by Councilwoman Hunter, seconded by Councilwoman Bullock. The Mayor said Dr. Dumas is being sworn in this evening as President of the Beckley Rotary Club and is the first lady of color to ever serve as the President of the Beckley Rotary Club.

OLD BUSINESS: Councilwoman Bullock said the East Beckley Post Office should reopen soon. Councilwoman Hunter asked for an update on the Opioid Settlement for the City and for Raleigh County. Mr. File said Wednesday, July 5th at 1:00 at the Raleigh County Courthouse a Board of Directors will be appointed. Councilman Sopher asked why the New River Pool has been closed on Sundays. He said he received two phone calls recently regarding this. Councilman Reedy said he also received a phone call regarding the pool being closed on Sundays. The Mayor said that Director of Parks & Recreation Leslie Baker is not here, and she would be the contact person regarding this.

NEW BUSINESS: Councilwoman

Hunter said she received a call from Cindy Parker with the Veteran's Museum who inquired about having help from the City for directional signage to the Veteran's Museum. Director of Board of Public Works Pam Frey said they would help in any way they can. Councilwoman Bullock said the City will have a lot of people visiting this weekend due to two reunions. Piney Oaks and Stratton are having reunions this weekend.

Councilwoman Hunter inquired about a "One Way" sign being posted informing drivers that McDonald's is at the end of a one-way street. The Mayor suggested that she and Chief Bailey of the BPD discuss this matter after the meeting.

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. Mary West voiced her concerns regarding drivers speeding on Larew Avenue and asked the City for an update on the petition she previously submitted requesting the speed limit be decreased from 25 mph to 15 mph. The Mayor asked Chief Bailey of the BPD if he had any comments. Chief Bailey said

the BPD conducted approximately seventeen patrols on Larew Avenue and one driver was speeding. Councilwoman Hunter asked Chief Bailey if a flashing sign alongside the road would deter speeding. Chief Bailey said the City no longer has that machine and it is expensive to replace. The machine requires software. Councilwoman Bullock asked if the City has speed boxes that can be utilized on Larew. The Mayor said that is what Councilwoman Hunter was referring to and the signs/boxes get vandalized and stolen. Councilwoman Hunter asked if speed bumps could be installed on Larew. The Mayor said speed bumps will not be installed and the speed limit will not be decreased.

Michelle Cochran voiced her concerns due to the number of feral cats in Woodcrest and the number of cats belonging to irresponsible owners. She asked the City if Section 3 of the City's Code could be modified. She said ultrasonic devices cost thirty dollars each which may help the problem, but it is not a solution. She said the Animal Control Officer said there is nothing he can do because there is no law(s) or ordinance(s) regarding cats. She said the only thing

mentioned in City code is containing cats while they are in heat. She said the officer told her that she can deter them with a BB-gun, utilize nonharmful deterrents, purchase motion detectors which activate sprinklers, purchase ultrasonic sound emitters (\$30/each), or capture and relocate the cats. The Mayor said he has a small discretionary fund that may help purchase some of the ultrasonic sound emitters. She thanked him and said she is looking for more of a solution requiring cat owners to have a license. Councilman Dunlap asked if she had any other suggestions. She suggested allowing the property owner the right to defend their property if the cat owners are not taking responsibility for their cats. Mr. File said he will soon attend a meeting with other city Attorneys at the end of July and he will be glad to ask if other cities have an ordinance in place regarding this issue. IT Director Bill Kelly lives in the same area and said he has a problem with cats. Councilman Reedy said his parents and others are having a problem with cats. Cats are also climbing on and scratching vehicles. Ms. Cochran thanked the City and said she appreciates the City working towards a

solution. Councilwoman Bullock asked if, at one time, was the City discussing having an Animal Control office. The Mayor said the City was but decided to work on a project that seems to be working out very well. He said it deals with dogs. The City has two volunteers who have resources to help unwanted dogs get adopted in other states. The County and the City purchased a van to transport dogs. He thinks the City is limited in what it can do regarding cats. Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump said the van to transport unwanted dogs has been working out well. The County had two Animal Control Officers and the City added a third one. The City is subsidizing the County for the third Animal Control Officer whose territory is within the City limits. The Humane Society does not accept cats. He said it is hard for Animal Control to catch cats. She said if the City required cat owners to have a license to own a cat, the licensing fees could be sent to the Animal Shelter so they can accept cats. The Mayor said the City has had a lot of discussions with the Humane Society and the Animal Shelter about cats. He said due to the number of vicious and stray dogs, cats are on the

bottom of the list when it comes to dealing with trying to keep people safe from dangerous animals.

Judy Patterson expressed her concern for the rising cost of monthly utility bills.

She asked Council members to canvas their neighbors to see if they are experiencing rising costs. She wants to know if this is an isolated issue in a certain ward or is it City wide.

Councilman Dunlap said the utility companies answer to the Public Service Commission (PSC). The Mayor said he would like to offer her a solution, but the utilities are regulated by the PSC. Frank Williams said that he does not have any comments tonight, but he will probably have comments during the July 11th Council meeting. There were no public comments online. With there being no further comments, Council unanimously approved adjourning the meeting on a motion by Councilman Dunlap and seconded by Councilwoman Hunter. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Mayor
Recorder-Treasurer