

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY CONVENED
AT 6:30 PM ON AUGUST 22, 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 Dunlap, Sherrie Hunter, Cody Reedy, Tom Sopher, and Kevin Price. The following Department Heads were present: Director of IT Bill Kelly, Assistant Director of IT Amy Evans, Anthony Martin (IT), Captain Ed Thompson of BFD, Director of Board of Public Works (BPW) Pam Frey, Chief Code Enforcement Officer Donald Morgan, Director of Beckley Events Jilly Moorefield, Chief of BPD Dean Bailey, and Director of Parks & Rec. Leslie Baker. Council member Robert Canter attended and participated via WEB-X.

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 acknowledged the passing away of two great citizens of Beckley, Mary Francis Roop and Henry Dickerson.

The Mayor commented on a recent editorial in the Register Herald that he felt was very slanted against him. He publicly apologized to Mary West for walking out before her public comments at the previous Council meeting. He explained the reason for doing so was because he did not want to address at that meeting her choice to use a bull horn for

three days to shout during operating hours in front of his office and WVU Tech President Stuart's office. She was shouting at passing cars and pedestrians her support for pay increases for City workers. Her behavior was very disruptive to City workers and employees at WVU Tech. He also apologized to the public. City Attorney Mr. File advised the public, as well as City employees and Council members, to avoid discussing personalities and avoid name calling when addressing City Council and the Mayor at Council meetings. City Council meetings are to discuss City business only.

Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump gave each Council member a copy of the City of Beckley's Annual Report of Policemen's Pension and Relief Funds which will be submitted to the Municipal Pensions Oversight Board. The report is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump gave each Council member a copy of the City of Beckley's Annual Report of Fireman's Pension and Relief Funds which will be submitted to the Municipal Pensions Oversight Board. The report is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Council dispensed with the reading of minutes from the City Council meeting dated August 8, 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, Council unanimously approved the appointment of Noah Kapp to the Police Civil Service Commission on a motion by Councilwoman Hunter seconded by Councilman Sopher. Councilman Dunlap abstained because Noah Kapp is employed by Councilman Dunlap. Mr. Kapp's term on the Police Civil Service Commission is a four-year term expiring June 30, 2027. Council unanimously approved the appointment of Troy Miller to the Planning Commission on a motion by Councilman Canter seconded by Councilman Sopher. Mr. Miller's term on the Planning Commission is a three-year term expiring August 31, 2026.

Next, a sealed bid was received from American Airworks for one breathing air compressor system for the City of Beckley Fire Department in the amount of \$45,965.00. The bid will be given to Councilman at Large Reedy,

Councilwoman at Large Hunter, Chief
Wills of the BFD, and Recorder-Treasurer
Billie Trump for review and for possible
award at a future Council meeting. The
bid is hereby incorporated into these
minutes.

Next, Mr. File presented and summarized an ordinance granting an easement to North Beckley P.S.D. through the Lewis McManus Trail. Mr. File said the second reading and public hearing of this ordinance will take place at the September 12th Council meeting. Mr. File read the ordinance by title, “An Ordinance Granting Easement To North Beckley P.S.D. Through Lewis McManus Trail”. Council unanimously approved the ordinance on a motion by Councilman Price and seconded by Councilman Reedy. A copy of the ordinance is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Mr. File summarized and read by title, “Ordinance Amending City of Beckley Code Chapter 15, Article I, By Inserting Section 15-37 Mobile Food Vendors And By Adding Mobile Food Vendors As Permitted Use In The B-1 Neighborhood-Highway Business District, B-2 General Business District, B-3 Courthouse Square And Manufacturing District”. He opened the public hearing. During the public hearing

Councilwoman Bullock said the permit is \$50.00. Captain Morgan said the paperwork can be picked up from the Code Enforcement Office and payments can be made at City Hall at the B&O Office. There were no comments from the public. Mr. File closed the public hearing. Council unanimously approved the ordinance on a motion by Councilman Sopher and seconded by Councilman Reedy. The ordinance is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

Next, Mr. File summarized the following Ordinance and introduced it by title, “Ordinance Amending City Of Beckley Code Chapter 15, Article I, By Inserting Sections 15-14 (a) and 15-15 (a) Adding Long-Term Care Facilities To The Permitted Uses In B-1 Neighborhood-Highway Business District And In B-2 General Business District.” Mr. File said that there are other districts in the City already permitting long-term care facilities, but these two particular districts did not include it in their permitted uses. Mr. File opened the public hearing. There were no comments or questions. Mr. File closed the public hearing. Council unanimously approved the ordinance on a motion by Councilman Dunlap and

seconded by Councilman Price. The ordinance is hereby incorporated into these minutes.

OLD BUSINESS: The Mayor said that Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump, Director of Board of Public Works (BPW) Pam Frey, and the City's Controller Jessica Chandler have worked on recognizing BPW employees with additional compensation. The Mayor said due to the amount of unused road salt the City has in storage, it allows the City to save a significant amount of money in the future by not having to purchase additional salt. The Mayor said that he wants to operate in full compliance with the WV Sunshine Law. He asked City Attorney Mr. File how many members of Council he can meet with at a time alone in his office regarding compensation for the BPW. Mr. File said the Mayor should not meet with more than one Council member at any time. He said the City needs to be vigilant that it does not violate the Open Meetings Act. The Mayor thanked Mr. File and invited Councilman Reedy to contact him to discuss this issue since Councilman Reedy inquired about this during the last Council meeting. The Mayor also invited other Council

members to contact him at their convenience also. A Workshop open to the public may be scheduled. The Mayor said that the City is a member of the New River Gorge Ascend Program and thinks the City's early efforts to be a remote worker City have now paid off.

Councilman Dunlap asked Mr. File when Council may anticipate an ordinance to effectuate the change to City Manager Form of Government. Mr. File said he anticipates the first reading taking place at the October 10th Council meeting and the second reading and public hearing at the October 24th meeting. Councilman Reedy asked if there is a new City map outlining the borders of each ward. Recorder-Treasurer Billie Trump said they have been working on redrawing the borders for the wards, but the map is not yet finalized because they were waiting on more census data and trying to balance the population in every ward as much as possible. Mr. File said the new map will need to be completed by the end of this year and prior to anyone signing up to run for the next term. Councilman Reedy inquired about the progress on Stiffler Drive. The Mayor said the City presented an estimate of repairs to the residents of

Stiffler Drive provided by Thrasher. Mr. File said Stormwater is the primary issue. The Mayor said the City needs to discuss the Stormwater issue with the Beckley Sanitary Board and get an update.

Councilman Dunlap thanked Mr. Bill Kelly, Director of IT for getting back to Council as to why they could not attend the last Department Head meeting and he appreciates Mr. Kelly letting Council know that they may be able to attend the next one.

NEW BUSINESS: Councilwoman Bullock commented on how nice the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Stratton Elementary School was. She said they are having open house tomorrow from 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Councilwoman Bullock asked if raises could be given to employees that have been employed by the City for ten, twenty, or thirty plus years and have not had a raise. Councilwoman Bullock asked Chief Code Enforcement Officer Donald Morgan for an update on Piney Oaks. She said vagrants are still going in the building there. Mr. Morgan said he has the owner's address and will get an update. She thanked Chief Bailey for all he does. Councilwoman Hunter asked

Mr. Morgan for an update on the Pagoda Motel. He said the people who recently purchased it have plans to demolish the whole parcel including the pavement. The buyers hope to close on the purchase in December and begin demolition in January. Mr. Morgan said the City is working with the existing owners to expedite the transaction. Councilwoman Bullock thanked Dr. Dumas (in the audience) for being the speaker today at the Rotary Club meeting. Councilwoman Bullock recognized Deloris Kidd who was in attendance at the Council meeting. Ms. Kidd is an alumnus of Stratton Elementary School. Councilwoman Bullock thanked her for all she has contributed to making the project of getting a new school there a success.

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 participant’s panel. Mary West voiced her concerns regarding drivers speeding on Larew Avenue. She stated her concern regarding the four-way stop at Earhart Street and Larew Avenue. She said if the City will not put in a four-way stop could it consider putting in speed bumps. She

also asked for help getting trees cut down. Councilman Dunlap said people need to notify the power company when streetlights are out in their area and used Raleigh Hill as an example. Next, Shakiyla Singleton asked for clarification on where she can and cannot set up her mobile food truck. Mr. File said he is glad to discuss any questions she has regarding mobile food trucks after the meeting. Chief Code Officer Donnie Morgan said she can pick up the necessary paperwork at the Code Enforcement Office and pay fees at the B&O Office at City Hall. Jennifer Hensley inquired about her concerns regarding the amount of money reported in the news about overtime at the BFD while City employees need raises. Mr. Trump said his door is always open to discuss this. Dustin Potter is an employee at the BPW and said the BPW employees need a raise. The Mayor said he doesn't think it will be too much longer and the BPW will see brighter days ahead. James Watkins, an employee at Board of Public Works (BPW), said the BPW employees want the same \$8,000.00 annual raise that the BPD received. He commented on the age of some vehicles currently in use at

the BPW. Danielle Stewart spoke about the City's budget and asked City Council and the administration to be good stewards of its money. With there being no further comments, Council unanimously approved adjourning the meeting on a motion by Councilman Dunlap and seconded by Councilman Price. The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Mayor
Recorder-Treasurer