

CITY OF KNOXVILLE
Regular Council Meeting
Knoxville Police Station, 215 N. Hebard St., Knoxville

Monday, December 7, 2020, 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Due to the current Illinois Governor's Executive Order regarding the COVID-19 Stay at Home Mandate, this Regular City Council Meeting was held via remote access in accordance with current Open Meetings Act guidelines.

Call to Order: Mayor Maurer called the Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

All recited the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

Roll Call: Present: Aldermen Eiker, Gruner, Hope, Howard, and Myers; Mayor Maurer, Treasurer Bivens, Chief of Police Poyner, Attorney McCoy, Engineer Cooper and City Clerk Wilt. **Absent:** Alderman Benjamin, Hillier and Naslund. Also in attendance: One member of the press. Alderman Benjamin joined the meeting at 7:22 PM.

Public Comments: None

Approval of Minutes: Alderman **Gruner moved** to approve the Minutes of the November 18, 2020 City Council Meeting as corrected. Alderman **Eiker seconded** the motion which **passed** with five (5) Yes votes and three (3) Absent.

GENERAL REPORTS

Attorney Report: Attorney McCoy reported that the letters asking for reimbursement of Police training costs had been served to former officers Keith and Cudd, but there had been no response yet.

Engineer Report: No report.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Bivens reported that the October report is part of the online packet and that the format had been adjusted to include the new Money Market fund accounts in General, Water, and Sewer funds. She noted that interest rates are very low right now.

City Clerk's Report: Clerk Wilt reported that the dates to file petitions for the April 6, 2021 Consolidated Election are December 14 through December 21, 2020 at City Hall during regular business hours.

INFORMATION ITEMS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

- 2021 Tax Levies:** Attorney McCoy provided a draft ordinance with an increase from the previous year of \$11,019.00, approximately 3%. Some funds increased \$0, while others increased more than 3%. Alderman Myers moved to approve the tax levy ordinance. As the public hearing to discuss the levies, planned for the December 21, 2020 meeting, has

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not yet occurred, there was no second to the motion. The matter will be addressed at the December 21, 2020 meeting following the hearing.

2. **City Hall Project – Geotechnical Analysis of Proposed Site:** Mayor Maurer reported that results of the soil boring and geotechnical analysis of the proposed City Hall addition were found satisfactory for building. Alderman **Gruner moved** to pay IMEG \$2,500.00 for this service. Alderman **Eiker seconded** the motion, which **passed** with five (5) Yes votes and three (3) Absent.

Alderman Benjamin joined the meeting at 7:22 PM, during the discussion of New Business item #3.

3. **BP Liquor License / Video Gambling Request:** Mayor Maurer stated that he had asked Mr. Pradeep Kataria to join the meeting for questions concerning his request for a pouring license for his business at 747 Knox Highway 10, which would allow him to offer video gambling. Mr. Kataria was not in attendance. If a license was granted to this business, other convenience stores should be given the opportunity to acquire the same type of license. Attorney McCoy stated that the new type of license proposed could be limited to the sale of beer and wine only. By general consensus, the Council does not want to consider issuing this pouring license.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Cell Phone Allowance Policy:** Mayor Maurer stated that currently all department heads and their immediate assistants receive a \$30.00 monthly cell phone allowance. Current Sanitation worker David Liniger still has an allowance as a former Water department employee to back-up the Water Supervisor. Street Worker Trevor Myers has been training in the Water department, but needs additional training to be on-call. Alderman **Howard moved** to give Trevor Myers the cell phone allowance for Water. Alderman **Gruner seconded** the motion, which **passed** with five (5) Yes votes, two (2) Absent, and one (1) Abstain. The allowance for Mr. Liniger will be discontinued when Mr. Myers is able to cover the on-call responsibilities.
2. **Resolution 2020-49 – Hire Full Time Police Officer James Bradford:** Chief Poyner stated that James Bradford was hired in August 2020, but only worked two days before resigning, citing concerns about committing to a full time position in Knoxville immediately after retiring from another agency. Mr. Bradford has now stated that he is fully committed to the position and has asked to be considered to fill the open spot in the Police Department. Alderman **Howard moved** to hire full time Police Officer James Bradford at \$16.50 per hour. Alderman **Eiker seconded** the motion, which **passed** with six (6) Yes votes and two (2) Absent. By general consent, Mr. Bradford will not need to perform the pre-employment screening again.
3. **Hotel/Motel Tax Rate Increase:** The present rate of Hotel/Motel Tax charged on the one motel is 4%, which currently does not cover costs for that account. Attorney McCoy

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stated that the maximum rate is 5%. Attorney McCoy was directed to draft an ordinance to present at the December 21, 2020 Council meeting to raise the tax to 5%.

Mayor's Report:

- The fixed natural gas delivery contract with Constellation for City buildings expires in May 2021. A supplier comparison rate sheet was provided by Rock River Energy. The contract will be voted on at the December 21, 2020 Council meeting.
- Service Line Warranties of America has notified the City that there are 173 residences enrolled in their program, with 191 policies sold and seven claims reported.
- The next regularly scheduled Council meeting will be held on Monday, December 21, 2020 as a virtual meeting via Zoom. A Public Hearing on 2021 Tax Levies will begin at 7:00 PM, with the Council meeting to immediately follow.

Committee Reports

- **Administration:** Alderman Myers suggested getting city emails to be used for city business after the new Council is seated in May 2021. Mayor Maurer will research and report back at the December 21, 2020 meeting.
- **Cemetery:** No report.
- **Economic Development:** No report.
- **Parks:** No Parks report, but Alderman Howard noted that the large dirt pile in the vacant lot at 220 W Ann St is still there, after Chief Poyner notified the owner that an abatement was pending for a nuisance violation. The 30 day grace period expires December 7, 2020, and Chief Poyner will now issue the abatement.
- **Police:** No report.
- **Sanitation:** Alderman Hope reported that Knox Township has requested to buy a two yard dumpster from the City, instead of the current arrangement of renting it monthly. This could be treated like a governmental agreement. Clerk Wilt will draft an ordinance to sell personal property, to be considered at the December 21, 2020 Council meeting. The dumpster would continue to be dumped by the City, and the Township would still be billed for pick-ups.
- **Streets:** No report.
- **Water/Sewer:** Alderman Gruner reported that the Water Department has created a schedule to exercise water valves and to identify fire hydrants in need of repair. The EPA report from the October 15, 2020 inspection has been received, noting some deficiencies, but it appears to be an exact copy of the previous inspection report, after which those deficiencies were addressed. Also, the state of Illinois is offering a new lead line replacement program, and Bruner, Cooper, and Zuck will assist the City in applying.

Adjourn: At 8:28 PM, Alderman **Gruner moved** to Adjourn the Meeting; Alderman **Benjamin seconded** the motion, which **passed** by voice vote with no dissent. The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Leslie Wilt, City Clerk