

CITY OF CLEVELAND
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 13, 2020
MINUTES

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the City of Cleveland was called to order by Mayor Josh Turner at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Nan Bowen, Rebecca Yardley, Kevin Stanley, and Bradley Greene.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Rebecca Yardley, in favor – Kevin Stanley and Bradley Greene, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council voted to approve the agenda for the July 13, 2020 City Council Meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING – WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT – Public discussion of need for wastewater system improvements, compliance with Section 391-3-6-.02 of Georgia’s Water Quality Control Rules (and amendments thereto), and to encourage public involvement

Meg Mbugua, Rindt-McDuff Engineer, gave an explanation of the need for the public hearing for the wastewater treatment plant improvements.

The purpose of the public hearing is to meet the requirements of Georgia Environmental Protection Division and Georgia Environmental Finance Authority. The hearing is held for the public to openly discuss the need for the wastewater improvements, alternative solutions, and to answer any question of environmental impact.

Ms. Mbugua explained the planned updates are a requirement of the City’s wastewater permit issued by GA. EPD. The city will have to make improvements to meet the new levels allowed for phosphorus intake in the system. The current system cannot meet the requirements.

The improvements will be constructed on the existing property and there will be no need to purchase additional property for the upgrades. The new system will deliver a cleaner discharge of water back into the creek.

Based on the existing facility, availability of property, buildings in place, and other installed equipment that will aid in the construction of the improvements, the alternative systems would not be feasible to construct or maintain through the life of the system, such as a spraying field which would require a large amount of property.

Ms. Mbugua asked if anyone present had any questions concerning the project. No one had any questions.

Tom O’Bryant, City Administrator, noted the City did not receive comments or inquiries about the wastewater treatment improvements.

PUBLIC HEARING – WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - continued

Mayor Turner asked again if anyone in attendance had questions or comments concerning the project. No one offered any questions or comments. Mayor Turner asked the City Council if they had any questions or comments concerning the project. The City Council did not have questions or comments.

Mayor Turner asked the City Council for a motion of accepting the report from Ms. Mbugua and the holding of the public hearing.

On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Bradley Greene, in favor – Rebecca Yardley and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council accepted the report of Ms. Mbugua, Rindt-McDuff Engineers, in accordance with Section 391-3-6-.02 of Georgia's Water Quality Control Rules (and amendments thereto), and noted the public had no comments or questions concerning the development.

RESOLUTION 2020-19 – Resolution to modify Hwy 129 North Sewer Expansion GEFA Loan for the Deferral of interest for 6-Months – Governor's Initiative

Tom O'Bryant, City Administrator, explained Governor Kemp has issued several executive orders to assist governments during the Covid-19 and uncertainty of the economy. One initiative is to relieve governments with infrastructure loans the opportunity to have the payments deferred for six-months.

The City Council approved the deferral of the Truelove Sewer loan at the July 6, 2020 City Council Meeting.

The City Council will need to adopt the resolution to participate in the loan deferral program for the loan on the Hwy 129 North Sewer Expansion.

The City Clerk informed the city will continue to deposit money in the capital reserve/sinking fund in the amount of the GEFA loans. The deferral of all loans will be added to the end of the maturity of the loan.

On motion by Rebecca Yardley, seconded by Bradley Greene, in favor – Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council voted to approve Resolution 2020-19 to modify the Hwy 129 North Sewer expansion GEFA loan for the deferral of payments, per Governor Kemp's initiative, and submit all the required documents.

CHIEF JOHN FOSTER – POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Foster presented two class requests.

Officer Raymond Rutledge to attend Drug Interdiction Techniques – there is no fee for this class.

Major Aaron Weiland to attend Chief Executive Training – a nine-day class to address management, media relations, communications, problem solving, decision making, budgeting, and human resource management. The cost is \$595.00 and is held in Duluth.

CHIEF JOHN FOSTER – POLICE DEPARTMENT - continued

Chief Foster stated he felt Major Weiland would benefit from the class for his *current* position. On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Rebecca Yardley, in favor – Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and Council approved the class request for Officer Raymond Rutledge and Major Aaron Weiland.

Chief John Foster, Police Department, presented the department statistics for June 1 through June 30, 2020.

The department issued 87 citations, conducted 17 arrests, responded to 96 incidents with 11 being domestic incidents.

The report notes the total of citation/warnings issued by a breakdown of race/sex. 102 warnings were issued, predominately white male and female and 87 citations were issued predominately within the same class. Chief Foster explained the recovery of stolen property. If property is stolen in Cleveland but recovered in another jurisdiction, the City shows the loss and the recovering jurisdiction is able to report the property as recovered.

Chief Foster informed of multi-county drug arrest in which a city employed agent participated in the surveillance. The drug task force has made additional arrest and have seized more drugs since the initial story broke last week.

Chief Foster updated the City Council of the city's drug agent conducting a separate investigation which resulted in an arrest, with a seizure of liquid methamphetamine and other drugs, firearms, as well as two BMW vehicles.

The City Council congratulated Chief Foster on the job of his officers.

GRANT KEENE – CITY ATTORNEY

Grant Keene, City Attorney, did not have new business to report.

TOM O'BRYANT – CITY ADMINISTRATOR

1. The Georgia Mountain Regional Commission is requesting the city nominate a new member to represent the city. Ms. Annie Sutton was the city representative and served on the commission for many years before her run for mayor. The commission covers 13 counties and 39 cities. Nan Bowen stated she would volunteer to serve on the commission. Mayor Turner asked if there were any more nominations to be made. There were no additional nominations and Mayor Turner closed the nomination. On motion by Rebecca Yardley, seconded by Bradley Greene, in favor – Nan Bowen and Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council voted to approve the nomination and appoint Nan Bowen to the Georgia Mountain Regional Commission to represent the City of Cleveland.

TOM O'BRYANT – CITY ADMINISTRATOR – continued

Before the next item on the agenda was discussed, Ms. Yardley informed she would recuse herself from the discussion and vote.

The item is to approve the agreement between the City and the White County School Board to provide a school resource officer for the upcoming school year. Ms. Yardley is employed by the White County School Board.

2. The 2020/2021 White County School Resource Officer agreement was presented for consideration. The agreement was delayed due to the state deciding the path to take to reopen schools.

The agreement is through July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Dr. Laurie Burkett is proposing \$50,000 as payment for the officer. The city budgeted \$54,000 to cover salaries, benefits, vehicle, equipment, and gas. Funding has prevented the school board to approve additional funds towards the resource officer.

Chief Foster questioned which schools would be covered. Jack P. Nix and the WC Middle School will be covered through the agreement. The agreement does not cover the alternative school. Chief Foster stated the alternative school should be covered by the White County Sheriff's Office. Chief Foster added if there are issues at the alternative school and dispatch is called, his officers will respond as part of their duty.

Chief Foster explained he has split the shift between two officers allowing him to utilize the two officers in other areas. By having the split hours, he is able to schedule the officers to also work patrol. Chief Foster explained it helps reduce the expense that should be charged to the school board.

Nan Bowen stated it's so late in the process that she cannot see how the city cannot sign it for this upcoming year. Mayor Turner agreed and stated there is an obligation to the kids. Bradley Greene also agreed but added the Council would need to review well in advance of the next school year.

Chief Foster informed the actual costs for an officer to cover the school is approximately \$70,000.

On motion by Nan Bowen, seconded by Bradley Greene, in favor – Kevin Stanley and carried. The Mayor and City Council approved the agreement between the City and the White County Board of Education in the amount of \$50,000 for the 2020/2021 school year. Ms. Rebecca Yardley recused herself from the vote on the agreement due to being employed by the White County School Board.

NEW BUSINESS

1. City Staff is requesting the Mayor and Council consider waiving the late fees for utility bills for the month of July. This is in reaction to the current Corona Virus crisis and the limitations utility users may have in paying utility bills. The City Clerk informed that the majority of utility customers continue to pay the utility bills and staff contacts delinquent accounts to make arrangements for payment

On motion by Bradley Greene, seconded by Kevin Stanley, and carried unanimously, in favor – Nan Bowen and Rebecca Yardley, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council voted to waive the penalties for the utility bills for the month of July 2020.

NEW BUSINESS – continued

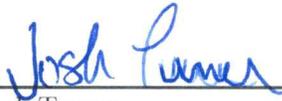
2. Typically utility disconnections, per city’s policy, are made after *two* months of non-payment. City staff have attempted to contact all customers that are three or more month’s delinquent. Some have made arrangements, some have paid, and others have not responded. This could mean they have vacated the property and the account needs to be deactivated. City staff is asking the Council to approve staff to disconnect utility accounts that are three or more months delinquent. There are approximately 15 accounts. On motion by Rebecca Yardley, seconded by Nan Bowen, in favor Kevin Stanley and Bradley Greene, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and Council voted to disconnect utility services to those accounts that are three or more months delinquent. City staff will continue to work with each customer with payment plans.
3. Public comments – Beth Truelove, White County Chamber, expressed her appreciation of the Mayor and Council working with citizens and businesses on the payment of utility bills.

OLD BUSINESS

1. The minutes of June 2020 were signed.

ADJOURNMENT

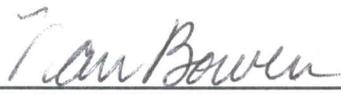
On motion by Rebecca Yardley, seconded by Kevin Stanley, in favor – Nan Bowen and Bradley Greene, and carried unanimously, the Mayor and City Council adjourned the City Council Meeting of July 13, 2020 at 7:07 p.m.



Josh Turner, Mayor



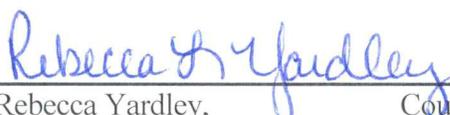
Kevin Stanley, Council Member
Ward 3
Mayor Pro Tem



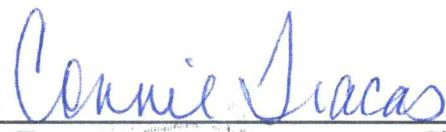
Nan Bowen, Council Member
Ward 1



Bradley Greene, Council Member
Ward 4



Rebecca Yardley, Council Member
Ward 2

Attest: 

Connie Tracas, City Clerk

