

MINUTES OF THE VAN WERT CITY COUNCIL

January 25th, 2020

President Jon Tomlinson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Tomlinson gave the invocation.

On call of the roll: Marshall, Kallas, Penton, Agler, Mergy, Hellman, and Davis were present.

Mergy made a motion to approve the agenda for the January 25th Council meeting. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Mergy made a motion to approve the minutes for the January 11th Council meeting. Agler seconded; all concurred.

COMMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS, & PETITIONS

Tomlinson gave the floor to Seth Baker, Chief Executive Officer of the Van Wert County Foundation, who opened the presentation from Van Wert Forward on their downtown plan. Baker introduced Aaron Domini, from OHM Advisors, for the downtown redevelopment master plan. Domini explained that they took a balanced approach for this plan, balancing market understanding with community aspirations. After detailing the process that led to this final stage of planning, Domini specifically addressed some of the specific targets of this redevelopment master plan, which included renovation of the Courthouse area, the conception of a "Linear Park" at Central, additional parking and landscaping along Central Avenue, improvements to streetscapes in portions of the city, a temporary park at the Home Guard site, and revamping Fountain Park. From there, Domini discussed some of the possible implementation steps, with information and suggestions on how the city, community, and private sector can utilize this plan. Baker closed the presentation with reflecting on the way the community has come together to develop this plan, citing 14 community organizations that have partnered for this project.

Tomlinson noted letters residents may have received from Energy Harbor - the new electric aggregation company for Van Wert County. He noted this is indeed legitimate.

Additionally, Tomlinson noted that the deadline for primary petitions, for anyone who had the intention to run for City Council President or City Council seats, was February 3rd, 2021. He explained that for a ward seat, 25 signatures were needed. For an at-large seat or Council President, or for any city-wide position, 50 signatures are needed.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

MAYOR: Markward opened by sharing that Main Street Van Wert will hold First Fridays in 2021, and many businesses will be open longer than usual during those events. The Chocolate Walk 2021, an advance ticket event, will be held on February 5th.

The Mayor also stated that FEMA informed the city that flood maps will change. He stated that the details have not been shared yet, but FEMA will hold a remote flood map information open house on March 4th from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. Login details will be shared when available.

Markward then asked Council to approve Mark Schumm to the Community Reinvestment Board (term ending 12/31/2022) and Fred Fisher to the Design Review Board (term ending 12/31/2023). He explained that George Adam will be stepping off of the Design Review Board, and the person to take that position must have a construction background.

Finally, Markward announced that Main Street Van Wert has reappointed Joanne Thatcher to a 3-year term on the Design Review Board.

Agler made a motion to appoint Schumm to the Community Reinvestment Board. Marshall seconded; all concurred.

Agler made a motion to appoint Fisher to the Design Review Board. Marshall seconded; all concurred.

SAFETY SERVICE DIRECTOR: Fleming opened by sharing that the heating and lighting project in the Municipal Building was nearing completion.

Fleming also shared two preliminary pieces of legislation for Council to consider. The first item was a repaving project for paving work on US 127 from the Van Wert-Mercer county line to Hospital Drive, which he noted would cost around \$27,000. The second item involved paving work on Lincoln Highway from Wayne Street to Middle Point-Wetzel Road, which would cost around \$30,000. He noted that this project was an ODOT project through Van Wert County Engineering Department, so that department will pay the cost, and then the city will pay the department back for their portion.

Fleming also addressed the Energy Harbor aggregation that Tomlinson had previously mentioned. He encouraged those who think they can find better rates to pay close attention to the fine print and fully understand the stipulations before opting out.

Agler asked about the speed limit discussions involving Mendon Road. Fleming shared that the average speed limit during their study was around 58 mph, including a 100 mph clock in both directions. This would suggest a speed limit change would be warranted. Fleming recommended moving forward with a 45 mph zone from the 5-way corner to the north property line of Blue Rock subdivision. Tomlinson asked if the township was on board with that, and Fleming confirmed.

AUDITOR: The Auditor had no report for the evening.

LAW DIRECTOR: Hatcher asked members of Council how they would like to receive documents in light of the new Google accounts that Council has set up. Discussion ensued on how to provide this information until everyone is accustomed to the new accounts.

The Law Director had no additional report on the evening.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

HEALTH, SERVICE, and SAFETY: Marshall opened by stating that he had no code violations to report.

Marshall then turned Council's attention to the current ordinance on fencing, which he did not feel was adequate enough or specific enough at this time. He explained that he worked with Bill Lawson to come up with a proposal to update and improve the wording and specifications of this ordinance. He shared this document with Council, and asked for their feedback on adding this as an addendum to the current ordinance, or an amended ordinance.

Tomlinson and Hellman shared their positive thoughts on the document. Tomlinson then noted that many areas of Van Wert would not be in compliance with the new requirements. Additional discussion was then held on how wording and language could be made clear in how to move forward specifically related to grandfather situations with residences, how to provide notice to the public, and how to draft a document to apply to various situations and scenarios.

Marshall made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare an ordinance amending the current Van Wert City Ordinance 150.36 (Fencing and Planting Screens). Agler seconded; Kallas, Mergy, Hellman, and Davis concurred. Penton abstained.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Kallas ceded the floor to Stacy Adam, Executive Director of Van Wert Area Economic Development Corporation. She first asked if Council had any questions regarding the information she provided at the 1/11/21 Council Meeting. No questions were asked.

Adam then gave a reminder to local business owners that the second round of the Paycheck Protection Program is now open until March 31, 2021. She briefly explained some of the changes to the program, and recommended that business owners contact their personal banks for more information. She specifically noted that Citizens National Bank, First Financial, US Bank, and Bank of Berne all should be able to provide information.

Adam also gave an update on the Home Guard Building, stating the demolition is finished. The entire project is not yet completed, but the demolition aspect is complete. The adjacent building needs stabilization. There is also waterproofing work, dirt and stone fill-in, some shoring from the basement of the adjacent building, and some brick work on the parapet wall adjacent building still to be done. Marshall questioned if the Main Street facade will stay in place, and Adam stated this was the intent, either as a front to a new building or, for the time being, as an entrance to a park. She also noted that the canopy from the front was removed and is currently being stored, with the intent to eventually refurbish and display it.

Lastly, Adam provided a Lank Bank update. She noted that the contract with the Land Bank expires in May of 2021. So far, 79 vacant, blighted parcels have been acquired across Van Wert

County, with 52 of those parcels transitioned - either for sale or transfer. There are currently 10 Lank Bank parcels that are, or will soon be, single family homes. She noted that 5 properties are in progress as of today, which are on track to finish by May. The intent, she stated, is to spend nearly every dollar made available to make those improvements in the neighborhood.

PARKS AND RECREATION: Parks and Recreation had no report for the evening.

FINANCE: Finance had no report for the evening.

JUDICIARY AND ANNEXATION: Mergy made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare an ordinance to accept the application for annexation of real estate on John Brown Road, on an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Mergy made a motion to introduce **Ordinance Number 21-01-001**. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Mergy made a motion to suspend statutory rules for **Ordinance Number 21-01-001**. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Mergy made a motion to pass **Ordinance Number 21-01-001: AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT THE APPLICATION FOR THE ANNEXATION OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE CONTAINING 22.763 ACRES FILED BY ALLIANCE PROPERTY GROUP, LLC, MORE OR LESS, LOCATED IN PLEASANT TOWNSHIP TO THE CITY OF VAN WERT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**, on its first and final reading. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Judiciary and Annexation had no additional report for the evening.

STREETS AND ALLEYS: Hellman made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare an ordinance approving legislation for paving work to be completed on US 127 from the Van Wert-Mercer county line to Hospital Drive, on an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to introduce **Ordinance Number 21-01-003**. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to suspend statutory rules for **Ordinance Number 21-01-003**. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to pass **Ordinance Number 21-01-003: ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF VAN WERT TO APPROVE PRELIMINARY LEGISLATION FOR PAVING WORK TO BE COMPLETED ON US ROUTE 127 FROM THE MERCER COUNTY LINE TO HOSPITAL DRIVE TO GRANT THE MAYOR THE AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO ANY AGREEMENTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IN THE FURTHERANCE OF SAID PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**, on its first and final reading. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare an ordinance approving legislation for paving work to be completed on Lincoln Highway from Wayne Street to Middle Point-Wetzel Road, on an emergency. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to introduce **Ordinance Number 21-01-004**. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to suspend statutory rules for **Ordinance Number 21-01-004**. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to pass **Ordinance Number 21-01-004: ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF VAN WERT TO APPROVE PRELIMINARY CONSENT LEGISLATION FOR PAVING WORK TO BE COMPLETED ON COUNTY ROAD 418 (LINCOLN HIGHWAY) FROM WAYNE STREET TO MIDDLE POINT-WETZEL ROAD, TO GRANT THE MAYOR THE AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO ANY AGREEMENTS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IN THE FURTHERANCE OF SAID PROJECT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY**, on its first and final reading. Agler seconded; all concurred.

Hellman made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare an ordinance for a speed limit change to 45 mph on Mendon Road inside the city limits. Agler seconded; all concurred. It was noted that the portion of the road inside city limits will be clarified and specified in the ordinance. Tomlinson also noted that this would not be on an emergency and would move through three readings.

Agler asked about an alley on Sycamore Street between Harrison and Cherry Streets that is a dead end. He said that a constituent had to put stone in that alley to keep vehicles from going into the alley. Agler asked if a sign could be posted to indicate a dead end. Fleming confirmed.

Streets and Alleys had no additional report for the evening.

PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT: Davis made a motion to ask the Law Director to prepare an ordinance approving legislation for the Mayor to sign a lease agreement with the Pleasant Township trustees, on an emergency. Penton seconded; all concurred.

Davis made a motion to introduce **Ordinance Number 21-01-002**. Penton seconded; all concurred.

Davis made a motion to suspend statutory rules for **Ordinance Number 21-01-002**. Penton seconded; all concurred.

Davis made a motion to pass **Ordinance Number 21-01-002: AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR TO SIGN A LEASE WITH THE PLEASANT TOWNSHIP TRUSTEES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**, on its first and final reading. Penton seconded; all concurred.

Property and Equipment had no additional report for the evening.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Tomlinson noted that Marshall had discussed code enforcement, and it would stay in unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

No new business was brought before Council.

CONSENT AGENDA

No items on the consent agenda.

RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES

Hellman made a motion to pass **ORDINANCE Number: 20-12-076: AN ORDINANCE CHANGING THE WEST SIDE OF MIDDLE STREET FROM MOBERLY STREET TO CABLE STREET TO A NO PARKING ZONE** on its third and final reading. Davis seconded; all concurred.

It was stated that no concerns were shared from the public, and this would take effect 30 days from this ordinance passing.

ADJOURN

Mergy made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Agler seconded; all concurred.



Clerk of Council
Andrew Bittner



Council President
Jon Tomlinson

02/8/2021

Date