

Wellston City Council

Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2022

Meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. by President Rick Hudson by asking Council and others in attendance to stand for the Pledge. He then called for the roll call.

Councilpersons answering the roll call included: Angela Spangler; Matti Vance; Fred Duby; Teresa Lemaster; and Roaby Browning. Lynley Carey was absent.

Mayor Charlie Hudson recognized Logan Remy as an outstanding member of the community for raising \$1,140 to purchase over 3,000 food donation items for Compel Ministries.

President Hudson then opened the floor to nominations and interested parties for the City's At-Large Council Seat Vacancy.

First to express interest was Kathy Helm, 616 S. New Jersey Avenue; Second to express interest was Walter "Bub" Norris, 230 McGhee Lane. Both parties addressed Council and were given the opportunity to answer questions.

President Hudson then closed nominations and requested a roll call vote from Council. The vote was as follows:

Browning-	Helm
Lemaster-	Helm
Duby-	Norris
Vance-	Norris
Spangler-	Norris

President Hudson then thanked both parties for their interest, stating both were good candidates. He then congratulated Norris on his win. Walter Norris will begin serving At-Large at the September 1st Council Meeting.

Public Comments

- Teresa Durae-Justice, 615 S. Pennsylvania Avenue, came to speak on the removal of the traffic light at the intersection of 6th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. She feels traffic is moving faster than 35 mph and that it is dangerous pulling out of her driveway. She stated that her home does have alley access, but a lot of her neighbors do not. She said the alley is fine to use during the summer months, but has been neglected by the City and cannot be used in the Winter due to deep ruts and lack of gravel. She asked Council to consider alternatives and suggested that the City return the light, reduce the speed limit on Pennsylvania Avenue, or make the intersection a 4-way stop.

The Mayor asked Justice if she could recall the last time the City has maintained the alley. Justice estimated 15 years. The Mayor then explained that once the City has stopped maintaining an alley, it becomes a right-of-way and is no longer recognized as an alley. The Mayor explained the difference between a vacated alley and a right-of-way. He then told Justice that the City is looking into a pedestrian crosswalk that would impact the speed limit in that area, as well as having the Police Department do a speed check. Justice asked if Council or Administration would consider putting the lights back in place. President Hudson reminded her that committee meetings were held on this matter and no one from the public attended; this was also an Administration decision and if a traffic light were to be replaced, it would be better served at a different location rather than 6th street. As far as lowering the speed limit, this cannot be done by the City because Pennsylvania Avenue is considered a highway and this would need ODOT's approval. The Service Director said he would contact ODOT and look into lowering the speed limit in this area due to the Catholic School. Brenner said a previous Administration had placed lowered speed limit signs near the School, but ODOT removed the signs not only because the City did not follow proper procedure, but also because the school does not face Pennsylvania Avenue and was deemed unnecessary.

- Megan Sowers, 750 North Pennsylvania Avenue, representing Jackson-Vinton Community Action, Inc., spoke on ongoing issues with the Wellston Water Department and to address comments made by the Mayor at a previous Council meeting. Sowers stated that once a client contacts JVCAI, a request is made to receive a breakdown of past water, sewage, and garbage account numbers, and any additional fees the client may have. Sowers said her agency expected issues during the software and personnel changes, so they made a visit to the Water Department. The agency was told the City would provide the bills, but would need to breakdown the totals needed themselves; however, the totals did not match. She then stated that she met with the Mayor, then held another meeting with the Water Department. During this meeting, one of the new Clerks had found a report with the information the agency requested. Sowers believes the issues have been resolved and understands the Water Department Clerks are new.

Minutes- All members present voted to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

Correspondence- none

Committees:

Finance- Spangler- none

Health & Safety- none

Public Service- Browning

- The Committee met before Council to discuss Rental Occupancy Safety Concerns, along with Landlord-Requested Rental Re-inspections, but recommends no changes.

Planning- Carey- none

Community Action- Spangler

- Spangler was previously appointed to this Committee. The Clerk was advised to send official notice to JVCAI.

Old Business- none

New Business- none

Legislation:

- Third Reading of Ordinance No. 2022-41- An Ordinance by the City of Wellston Legislative Authority changing the Zoning of particular parcels and amending the official Zoning District Map of the City of Wellston to reflect those changes.
Sponsor: Vance
Discussion: Ohio Avenue Storage for Buff^olo Dip
A Motion to Adopt and Pass was made by Spangler, seconded by Duby, and approved by all in attendance.
- Third Reading of Ordinance No. 2022-43- An Ordinance by the City of Wellston Legislative Authority amending relevant Sections of Chapter 110 of the Wellston Code.
Sponsor: Spangler
Discussion: Business Licenses
There was no Motion to Adopt and Pass.
- Second Reading of Resolution No. 2022-45- A Resolution authorizing the Mayor to prepare and submit an application to participate in the Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvement and/or Local Transportation Improvement Program(s) and to execute contracts as required and Declaring an Emergency.
Sponsor: Vance
- Third Reading of Ordinance No. 2022-46- An Ordinance approving Additional Appropriations in the General Fund, transferring funds to the Street Levy Capital Improvement Fund and Declaring an Emergency.
Sponsor: Spangler
Discussion: Corrected Lookout Drive Funds; Vance reminded Council that this is a simple line-item adjustment, that the money has already been spent because of mistakenly-approved legislation. The previous legislation was mistakenly passed as an emergency due to confusion pertaining to the vacant Council Seat and majority votes. The Law Director then said that this originated from General Fund monies and is simply “accounting on paper at this point.”
A Motion to Adopt and Pass as an Emergency was made by Spangler, seconded by Vance, and approved by all in attendance, except Lemaster- who cast the only “no” vote. This Ordinance did pass, but not as an Emergency.

- First Reading of Resolution No. 2022-50- A Resolution Accepting the Rates as Determined by the Budget Commission and Authorizing the Necessary Tax Levies and Certifying Them to the County Auditor.

Sponsor: Browning

Discussion:

- First Reading of Resolution No. 2022-51- A Resolution Authorizing the Submittal of an Application for the PY 2022 CDBG Residential Public Infrastructure Grant.

Sponsor: Lemaster

Discussion: Please pass as an emergency on third read. This is for sanitary sewer separation.

Mayor

- The Mayor began by addressing Sowers' comments. He stated his previous comments pertaining to the Water Clerks not being employees of Community Action was in response to the Water Clerks' frustration of gathering data under a new system and feeling they were being pressured for immediate response back to JVCAI. The Mayor spoke of previous partnerships between the City and JVCAI, his appreciation for their services. Hudson said he did not mean to "step on toes," but part of his job is to defend the City Employees and try and relieve any frustrations they may have. He then told Sowers to call his office anytime.
- Hudson said the Administration is working on getting more grants for projects including a new water plant, next phases for the Broadway/New York Project, and also an upcoming meeting with a grant coordinator from Vinton County.
- The Mayor then complimented Kathy Helm on her resume and told her to feel free to meet with him before election time.

Service Director

- Brenner reported that the Infrastructure and Street Crews are doing sidewalks along Pennsylvania Avenue.
- The Service Director said some cleanup work will be performed at The Depot, along with putting in a line on Finley Chapel and some small projects at the cemetery.
- He then reported the new trash truck is running and seems everything seems to be going well and he continues to work on grants as well.
- Compliments were given as to the new sidewalks and Brenner stated it was his desire to have sidewalks to the apartments; however, this would be a very costly project.

Law Director- none

Auditor- none

City Clerk's Reports- June and July reports were received by Council and approved by all in attendance.

Treasurer Report- none

Fire- Pelletier state August was a slow month, but there was an incident the day before the Council meeting. A chlorine line had ruptured due to a faulty piece of equipment. David Lehew, the employee on duty, was able to make it safely out of the building. The General Mills guard shack was evacuated and State Route 327 was shut down for an hour and a half. The Fire Department and the Hazmat Team responded. Pelletier informed Council that Chlorine is extremely corrosive. The Service Director added that so far damages have reached \$36,000 and expects another \$20,000. An insurance claim is being filed.

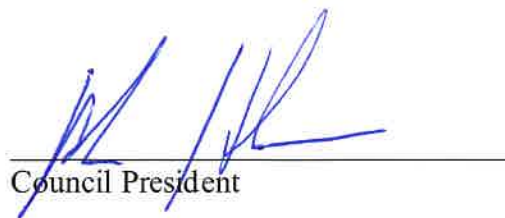
Zoning- Pelletier apologized for his previous absences and said the rental inspections are going well. 343 homes are registered, 67 are not, 174 were sold, and 14 are recorded land contracts. Pelletier then touched on Brandon Lambert coming to his office and addressing Council concerning landlord-requested rental re-inspections. The Officer explained that his department does not evict; however, the landlord can report that his property is not in compliance, which causes the rental certificate to be pulled. This can then be a tool in the eviction process and the property would need to be re-inspected for certification. The renter may also request another inspection if they feel it necessary.

Police- The Chief says he hopes to have the requested traffic data gathered by next Council meeting.

An Executive Session with Jackson County Economic Development Partnership Director Sam Brady at 7:58 p.m. No action was taken.

Executive Session ended at 8:21 with a motion to adjourn made by Spangler, seconded by Vance, and approved by all in attendance.


Council Clerk


Council President