



Martins Ferry City Council Meeting Minutes of January 8, 2020

The Martins Ferry City Council met in Regular Session on Wednesday, January 8, 2020, at 6:00 p.m., at the Donald Myers Council Chambers. The meeting was called to order by Council President Kristine Davis with the Pledge of Allegiance recited by those present in chamber, followed by a prayer by the Clerk.

Answering Roll Call were Bob Hunker, First Ward Council Member; Bruce Shrodes, Second Ward Council Member; Suzanne Armstrong, Third Ward Council Member; Rick Rodgers, Fourth Ward Council Member; Thomas Burns, Jim Schramm and Jack Regis, Council at Large Members.

President Davis noted that everyone was sworn into office before the December 18, 2019 Council Meeting.

Mr. Regis motioned to re-hire Kay McFarlan as the Council Clerk. Mr. Rodgers seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Regis, Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns and Schramm voting yes. The motion passed.

Mr. Schramm motioned to re-elect Mr. Rodgers as President Pro Tempore. Mrs. Armstrong seconded the motion. A roll call vote was heard with Schramm, Regis, Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, and Burns voting yes. Mr. Rodgers abstained. The motion carried.

Minutes: Minutes of the December 18, 2019 Meeting were approved as written.

Correspondence: A notice was received from the Ohio Division of Liquor Control notifying Council that the Bell Store #1074 of the Hartley Co., 507 Crawford St., in Martins Ferry requested a liquor license. There was no objection to this request.

Reports of Officers of the City:

Mayor: Mayor Davies thanked all the citizens who voted for him and vowed to work with Council to make this a smooth transition. He said there will be some changes in the way the city does business and how it is structured. Mayor Davies will not micro-manage but rely on the supervisors to do their jobs. Currently city crews are doing regular maintenance and patching potholes.

Mayor Davies asked Council to pass the ordinance establishing part-time emergency medical services (EMS) supervisors and the ordinance abolishing the positions of EMS Coordinator and EMS Captain. It was announced that Mr. Jack Regis, Jr. was appointed Safety Director as of January 1, 2020.

Office hours for the Mayor will be Monday-Thursday, 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

The Mayor asked Council to go into Executive Session at the end of the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

Service Director: No report.

Safety Director: Director Regis spoke on behalf of the ordinances being considered at this meeting that will impact the City's Emergency Medical Services including:

- Rescinding the \$0.50 Shift differential for employees having a WV EMT License. The city's ambulances no longer perform WV medical transports so this shift differential is no longer needed.
- Establish an EMS Board and abolish the EMS Coordinator Position. Board members will be appointed by the Mayor and will consist of members of Council, EMS, Fire Department and community members. Board members will not be compensated.
- Abolish the full-time EMS Captain Position. This position will be replaced with an ordinance creating part-time EMS Supervisors who will be appointed by and work at the will of the Mayor.

EMS is also looking to fill 2 full-time positions and increasing the number of part-time employees, especially paramedics. They are looking to lease the former C&L Building and establish contract parking for the lower end of the parking lot. A list of equipment and building upgrades/repairs is also being compiled.

Roof repairs have been completed at the Liberty Fire Station.

The Safety Director's written report will be included with these minutes.

Auditor: Auditor Randall distributed year-end reports to Council. There was \$152,000 carried over from 2019, although the city needs \$200,000 for the 1st quarter of 2020. The first collection from R.I.T.A. (Regional Income Tax Authority) for this year has been received and it is down \$8,000. Financial reports have been sent to the County and it will take some time to receive the certifications.

In order to meet payroll for the Street Department this month, Auditor Randall asked Council's permission to transfer \$20,000 from the General Fund to the Street Department. The Mayor reported that the owners of East Ohio Regional Hospital did pay the property tax.

There was a 39% increase in employee health insurance costs in December. Health Insurance from the Stark County Consortium is being considered.

Law Director: Councilman Regis asked Mr. Stecker if there were any updates regarding the YMCA managing the Recreation Center. Mr. Stecker said he is waiting on a proposal from them.

Police Department: No report.

Water Department: Superintendent Suto reported his department has been working on several water breaks. Tomorrow the EPA will be doing a micro-certification in the lab and the testing of lead and copper will be performed. All 8 wells have been cleaned and rebuilt or replaced. A gasket has blown on a 16 inch water line. The part has been ordered. If the part is unable to adequately fix the break, part of the city will have to be shut down in order to repair it properly.

Fire Department: No report.

Code Administrator: No report.

Park District: No report.

Reports of Committees of Council:

Because of the new administration, President Davis announced that all committees will stay the same for the 1st quarter of this year.

Finance and Audit: At the next Council Meeting, Chairman Regis will set a date for the next committee meeting.

Street: No report.

Ordinance: Mr. Shrodes set the next committee meeting for Wednesday, January 15, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. He asked that in the future, ordinances be made available to the committee first before being presented to Council, especially safety ordinances. Some committee members don't have email and didn't get these ordinances until today. Because of the urgency of the situation, Mr. Shrodes asked Council to pass the ordinance Abolishing the Positions of EMS Coordinator and EMS Captain and the ordinance for Establishing Part-Time Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Supervisors.

Sewer/Sidewalk: No report.

Code Administration: No report.

Safety: No report.

Service: No report.

Cemetery: Mr. Burns reported that he spoke to Mayor Davies about re-setting some grave stones in the cemetery. Mayor Davies has access to heavy equipment that can aid in this endeavor. Mr. Burns will not be able to attend the next Council Meeting due to his wife's surgery.

Public Relations: No report.

Real Estate: No report.

Utility Committee: The Utility Committee met on January 6, 2020 to discuss the future replacement of the city's water meters with a representative from Master Meter and their installation company. The next meeting will be scheduled when a representative from Badger Meters will be available to meet with the committee.

Income Tax: No report.

Citizens To Be Heard: President Davis reminded citizens to limit their speaking to 5 minutes.

Rev. William Webster, Grace Presbyterian Church, Fourth and Hanover Streets, informed Council that he was appointed by the Belmont County Commissioners to be the Chairman of the 2020 Census for Belmont County. In the last Census, it was estimated that Bellaire, Ohio, was undercounted by 27%. If the count had been correct, Bellaire would now be a city and not a village. The first census meeting will be on Wednesday, January 22, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. at the Grace Presbyterian Church. Rev. Webster invited anyone interested in helping to attend. He asked Council to remember the 8-9-10 slogan meaning that it takes 8 minutes to complete 9 questions and it will affect our County for the next 10 years. April 1 is the kick-off day when everyone will receive a questionnaire through the United States Postal Service or email. Rev. Webster hopes everyone is counted so Martins Ferry will remain a city and be eligible for grants and subsidies from the government.

Richard Hord of 915 Virginia Street, welcomed Mayor Davies and offered his services to help the Mayor and the city. Mr. Hord asked the Mayor what his top priorities were for this year. Mayor Davies said he would like the downtown area cleaned up to attract new businesses and improve the area for the already established businesses. He would also like to see Martins Ferry be a kinder, gentler city where

citizens know each other and help their neighbors. When Mr. Hord inquired about the possible sale of East Ohio Regional Hospital, the Mayor told him there are meetings taking place but nothing concrete yet.

Ordinances and Resolutions:

An Ordinance Establishing Part-Time Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Supervisors.

Motion was made by Mr. Shrodes to suspend the rules for reading the ordinance. Motion was seconded by Mr. Burns. A roll call vote was heard with Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis and Hunker voting yes. The motion carried. Mr. Regis motioned to pass the ordinance as read. Motion was seconded by Mr. Hunker. A roll call vote was heard with Regis, Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns and Schramm voting yes. The motion carried and the ordinance was declared passed.

An Ordinance Abolishing The Positions Of EMS Coordinator And EMS Captain And Declaring An Emergency.

Motion was made by Mr. Shrodes to suspend the rules for reading the ordinance. Motion was seconded by Mr. Schramm. Mr. Shrodes noted that the passage of this ordinance and the previous one is very important for the operation of the EMS and for safety of the citizens. A roll call vote was heard with Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis and Hunker voting yes. The motion carried. Motion was made by Mr. Schramm to pass the ordinance as read. The motion was seconded by Mr. Burns. A roll call vote was heard with Schramm, Regis, Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, and Burns voting yes. Mr. Rodgers abstained. The motion carried and the ordinance was declared passed.

An Ordinance Amending The Salary For The Position Of Code Administrator and Declaring An Emergency.

Motion was made by Mr. Shrodes to suspend the rules for reading the ordinance. Motion was seconded by Mr. Schramm. A roll call vote was heard with Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis and Hunker voting yes. Motion carried. Motion was made by Mr. Rodgers to pass the ordinance as read. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Armstrong. A roll call vote was heard with Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis, Hunker, Shrodes and Armstrong voting yes. The motion carried and the ordinance was declared passed.

An Ordinance Establishing An EMS Advisory Board.

This ordinance was given a first reading and will go to a second reading.

An Ordinance to Repeal and Abolish Ordinance 2013-02 That Established Additional Wages For EMS Personnel Possessing Both An Ohio and West Virginia Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Certification.

This ordinance was given a first reading and will go to a second reading.

Miscellaneous Business:

Mr. Shrodes motion that Council not contest the application for a liquor license for the Belmont Brewing Company. Motion was seconded by Mr. Burns. A roll call vote was heard with Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis and Hunker voting yes. The motion was declared passed.

Mr. Hunker made the motion to authorize the Auditor to transfer \$20,000 from the General Fund to the Street Department Fund. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Armstrong. A roll call vote was heard with Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, and Regis voting yes. The motion was declared passed.

Mr. Regis made a motion to reflect Council has received reports from the Officers and Management, and to incorporate these reports into the minutes. Motion was seconded by Mr. Rodgers. After an affirmative voice vote, the motion passed.

Mr. Shrodes made a motion that Council go into Executive Session under Ohio Revised Code 121-122 G1 for personnel. Ohio Revised Code 121-122 G1 reads: Hold an Executive Session for the employment dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, compensation of a public employee or an official where the investigation of charges or complaints against a public official, employee, licensee or regulated individual unless the public employee, official, licensee or regulated individual requests a public hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Burns. A roll call vote was heard with Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis and Hunker voting yes. Motion carried.

Mrs. Armstrong made a motion that Council go out of Executive Session. Motion was seconded by Mr. Hunker. A roll call vote was heard with Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis, Hunker, and Shrodes voting yes. The motion carried.

The current EMS Union Contract expires April 30, 2020. Mayor Davies said he has talked with union officials and he thinks they have come to an agreement. He will give the details to Mr. Stecker to review.

Safety Director Regis described the duties of the proposed EMS Advisory Board. This Board would consist of 5-7 members. These members would be representatives from: Council's Finance Committee, Council's Safety Committee, the Fire Department, EMS Employees, community members and hopefully someone from the management side for the re-opening of the Emergency Room at East Ohio Regional Hospital. The Mayor and the Safety Director would be ex-officio members. The Board would consider and vote on capital improvements such as building improvements and new vehicles. These recommendations for improvements and purchases would then be brought to Council for approval.

Mr. Hunker moved to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Shrodes. After an affirmative voice vote, the meeting was adjourned with a salute to the flag.



Kay H. McFarlan, Clerk of Council



Kristine Davis, Council President