



Martins Ferry City Council Meeting Minutes of May 6, 2020

The Martins Ferry City Council met in Regular Session on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at 6:00 p.m., in the Gym of the Martins Ferry Recreation Center. The meeting venue was again changed in order to allow personal separation due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19).

The meeting was called to order by Council President Kristine Davis with the Pledge of Allegiance recited by those present, 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 Sr., Council at Large Members.

Minutes: Minutes of the April 22, 2020 Meeting were approved as written.

Correspondence: There was no correspondence.

Reports of Officers of the City:

Mayor: Mayor Davies reported that Eastern Ohio Regional Wastewater Authority (EORWA) has reimbursed the city for half of the expenditures at the Turf Care Lift Station. He would like to place this money in the Sewer Capital Outlay Fund to make payments back to the Permanent Improvement Fund. This action would avoid employee layoffs. Two employees have been moved to the Sewer Department to build catch basins and this money would help pay for salaries and materials. Sewer improvements have been mandated by the EPA and if the city doesn't start showing an effort to comply, fines will be issued.

The Mayor explained to Council the changes that were negotiated for a new EMS contract. He asked Council to approve these changes.

Quotes have been received from Idealease for the lease of a truck and the purchase of a trailer for the Transfer Station.

Truck - Cost \$1,488 per month for 8 years. Includes a maintenance agreement.

Trailer - Cost \$1,067 per month for 8 years. Includes a maintenance agreement.

The Mayor asked Council for more funding for the Cemetery since only \$9,000 is left in the fund and the grass is growing fast.

A potential buyer for East Ohio Regional Hospital may address Council at a future date.

Two city employees opted for volunteer lay-offs. The Mayor doesn't think they will choose to return to the city since they are pursuing other careers.

Service Director: Mr. Sutak distributed details of the closure of the St. Rt. 647 Project. Work will begin on May 18, 2020 and last for about 1 month, depending on weather. When this project is finished, Mr. Sutak will pursue ODOT regarding ownership of St. Rt. 647.

City employees have been patching potholes, paving, and cutting grass on St. Rt. 7 and the ballfields.

Auditor: Auditor Randall informed Council that the General Fund will have to be closely monitored this year. During the month of May, there are 3 payroll dates, clothing allowance and the liability insurance payments due. There is \$5,000 available to give to the Cemetery Fund.

Auditor Randall asked Council to consider passing the 2021 budget at the last meeting in June instead of the first meeting in July. She requested the meeting be held at the Martins Ferry Recreation Center because before the budget is approved, a public hearing has to be held.

EORWA reimbursed the city \$64,712.46 for the Turf Care Project. Ms. Randall explained that since \$42,513 was taken from the Sewer Capital Project Fund to pay for part of this project, then only \$42,513 can be returned to this fund. An amount of \$56,200 was taken from the Permanent Improvement Fund (PI) for this project. After reimbursing PI with the remaining amount of \$22,199, a balance of \$34,000 is owed to PI. Auditor Randall informed Council that this amount can be set up as a loan but Council will need to state the terms of this loan. She suggested 2% interest for 5 years.

Safety Director: No report.

Law Director: No report.

Police Department: No report.

Water Department: No report.

Fire Department: No report.

Code Administrator: No report.

Park District: No report.

Reports of Committees of Council:

Finance and Audit: The Finance Committee met on April 28, 2020. Mr. Regis said discussion centered on 5 items. He hopes that layoffs can be avoided but was concerned that the city is falling apart. The budget will have to be watched very carefully this year. Another meeting will be scheduled, possible around the first part of June. Minutes of the April 28th Finance Meeting will be filed with these minutes.

Street: No report.

Ordinance: Mr. Shrodes announced there are several ordinances for Council to consider later in the meeting.

Sewer/Sidewalk: No report.

Code Administration: No report.

Safety: No report.

Service: The next Service Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Topic of discussion will be the trash problem in the city.

Cemetery: Mr. Burns told Council he will begin working on the cemetery building again since the weather is getting nicer.

Public Relations: No report.

Real Estate: No report.

Utility Committee: No report.

Income Tax: No report.

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

Mike Masters, 1059 Central Avenue, spoke to Council about getting the grass cut on a regular basis at the Park in Crawford Heights. He asked Mr. Sutak to call him about securing grants to upgrade the playground equipment at the Park. The Mayor said the Crawford Heights Park is included on the grass cutting schedule and the city is doing the best it can with limited funds and limit workers.

Ordinances and Resolutions:

An Ordinance Authorizing the Auditor To Transfer 10% of Net Income of the Water Department to Water Capital Projects Fund.

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

A Resolution Requesting the County Auditor to Certify to the City of Martins Ferry the Total Current Tax Valuation of the City of Martins Ferry and the Dollar Amount of Revenue that Would be Generated by a Five (5.0) Mill Levy and Declaring an Emergency.

This resolution was given a first reading. Motion was made by Mr. Shrodes to suspend the rules. Motion was seconded by Mr. Rodgers. 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. Hunker to pass this resolution as read. 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 carried and the resolution was declared passed.

A Resolution Requesting the County Auditor To Certify to the City of Martins Ferry the Total Current Tax Valuation of the City of Martins Ferry and the Dollar Amount of Revenue that Would Be Generated By A One (1.0) Mill Renewal Levy and Declaring an Emergency.

Motion was made by Mr. Regis to suspend the 72 Hour Rule. Motion was seconded by Mr. Shrodes. A roll call vote was heard with Regis, Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns and Schramm voting yes. The motion carried. Motion was made by Mr. Regis to suspend the rules. 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. Motion was made by Mr. Rodgers to pass this resolution as read. Motion was seconded by Mr. Schramm. A roll call vote was heard with Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, Regis, Hunker, Shrodes and Armstrong voting yes. The motion carried and the resolution was declared passed.

A Resolution Declaring A State of Emergency in The City of Martins Ferry Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Disease Outbreak.

This Resolution was given a first reading.

Motion was made by Mr. Hunker to amend this Resolution. Council agreed on the following reasons for the revisions as stated by Mr. Burns in his report:

- 1) Resolution needs to differentiate between a COVID-19 and regular emergency.
- 2) Length of Resolution – Sunset Clause (needs tied to the end of National State of Emergency or State Emergency for COVID-19).
- 3) It gives too much ambiguous power to officials.
- 4) Wording of the Resolution was ambiguous and open-ended.

Motion was seconded by Mr. Shrodes. A roll call vote was heard with Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns, Schramm, and Regis voting yes. The motion was declared passed and Mr. Stecker will revise this Resolution and distribute it to Council before the next meeting.

An Ordinance Vacating Alley D and A Portion of John Street in Burkle's Addition in the City of Martins Ferry, Ohio.

This ordinance was given a first reading.

Miscellaneous Business:

Mr. Burns reported that due to the COVID-19 Virus and the restriction on gatherings, he has postponed displaying the banners until November 11, Veteran's Day. A Dedication Ceremony may be held with the Annual Veteran's Day Tribute.

Mr. Regis made a motion to accept the EMS Contract that was negotiated by the Administration with no objections by the Auditor. Motion was seconded by Mr. Schramm. A roll call vote was heard with Regis, Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns and Schramm voting yes. The motion carried and the contract was approved.

Mr. Regis made a motion to distribute the \$64,712.46 reimbursement from EORWA as follows: place \$42,513 in the Sewer Capital Fund and \$22,199 in the Permanent Improvement Fund. The remaining balance of \$34,000 owed to the Permanent Improvement Fund will be set up as a loan at 2% interest for 5 years. Mr. Hunker seconded this motion. A roll call vote was heard with Regis, Hunker, Shrodes, Armstrong, Rodgers, Burns and Schramm 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. Hunker. After an affirmative voice vote, the motion passed.

Mr. Shrodes made a motion to authorize the Mayor to lease a truck at \$1,488 per month and to purchase a trailer at \$1,067 per month for 8 years from Idealease. Motion was seconded by Mr. Burns. A roll call vote was heard with Shrodes, Armstrong, Burns, Schramm, Regis and Hunker voting yes. Mr. Rodgers abstained. The motion was declared passed. Money for the truck and trailer will come from the Sanitation Department.

The Mayor stated that 2 people are working part-time in the cemetery cutting grass. Mr. Sutak will call the County to see if the City can get Service Workers to come and help with the grass cutting.

Mr. Hunker moved to adjourn, which was seconded by Mr. Rodgers. 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