

**Monroe Council Minutes
Regular Meeting of Council
March 24, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio**

Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Frentzel opened the regular meeting of Council at 6:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Council members present: Jason Frentzel, Keith Funk, Anna Hale, Todd Hickman, Christina McElfresh, and Robert Routson.

Staff members present: City Manager William J. Brock
Law Director K. Philip Callahan
Chief of Police Robert Buchanan
Assistant to the City Manager/Clerk of Council Angela S. Wasson

Mr. Funk moved to excuse Mr. Callahan; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Funk moved to approve the Council Minutes of March 10, 2020 and Finance Committee Minutes of March 10, 2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Visitors

None.

Committee Reports

None.

Old Business

Resolution No. 21-2020. A Resolution accepting the lowest and/or best bid submitted for the Local Roadway Striping Project and authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement by and between the City of Monroe and Aeromark LLC for said project. (Second Reading)

Mr. Brock requested adoption as an emergency on the second reading.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Resolution No. 21-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the second reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 21-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Resolution No. 21-2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution No. 22-2020. A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract by and between the City of Monroe and other participating agencies located in Warren County to establish the Warren County Drug Task Force Council of Governments. (Second Reading)

Mr. Brock noted that no changes have been made since the first reading.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the second reading of Resolution No. 22-2020 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 22-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Resolution No. 22-2020; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

New Business

Emergency Resolution No. 23-2020. A Resolution accepting the lowest and/or best bid submitted for the Highway Striping Project, authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement by and between the City of Monroe and Aeromark LLC for said project and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Brock stated that this is the second phase of the striping program for certain intersections along State Route 63.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 23-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Resolution No. 23-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 23-2020; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

Ordinance No. 2020-08. An Ordinance, amending and supplementing Ordinance No. 2020-06, otherwise known as the permanent appropriations ordinance, to meet current expenses and other expenditures of the City of Monroe, during fiscal year ending December 31, 2020.

Mr. Brock explained this is an adjustment to the appropriations. The adjustments are 1) increase legal expenses as we are going into conciliations with the Fire Department, upcoming negotiations with the Police Department; and needing legal guidance with the COVID-19; 2) We received a larger bill than anticipated from the Bureau of Workers Compensation; 3) Construction management costs of Monroe Bicentennial Commons; and 4) Increase for the

City's portion of the Yankee Road Water Line. It was appropriated last year; however, the bill was received this year.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Ordinance No. 2020-08 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Ordinance No. 2020-08 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Ordinance No. 2020-08; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll call vote: five ayes; one nay (Hickman). Motion carried.

Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-09. An Ordinance approving a final plat for The Trails of Todhunter, Section One, Block A, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Brock explained that both Ordinance No. 2020-09 and Ordinance No. 2020-10 relate to the subdivision on Todhunter Road. There are several items we are working with the developer on.

Mrs. McElfresh asked what is the time-frame on working out the remaining issues with staff. Mr. Brock replied that the conservation issue is the first one in the City and we are close to defining that language. Mr. Brock did not know when the cluster mailboxes would be resolved with the United States Postal Service. We are finalizing some bonding that should be completed by the end of next week.

Mr. Frentzel noted that a few people had issues with this and it can be read as a first reading rather than as an emergency or we can table it.

Mrs. McElfresh wasn't comfortable in adopting this evening with the outstanding issues.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-09 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-09 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-09; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-10. An Ordinance approving a final plat for The Trails of Todhunter, Section One, Block B, and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-10 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-10 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-10; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-11. An Ordinance extending the deadline for the filing and payments of the City of Monroe income tax for the filing year 2019 and declaring an emergency. Mr. Brock advised that this will extend the deadline for tax filing to match the Federal deadline.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-11 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-11 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-11; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-12. An Ordinance to declare certain emergency procedures necessary for the continued governance of the City during the current nation state of emergency and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Callahan advised that last week the Attorney General sent out a letter outlining the procedures that must be followed if you have a remote meeting. Mr. Callahan emphasized that this letter was not a legal opinion. Mr. Callahan explained that if it is determined that remote meetings are permitted, this legislation details how such a meeting should be handled. He informed Council that the State Legislature is meeting to consider amending the Open Meetings Act to permit this type of meeting. There have been some municipalities that have already held remote meetings; however, he recommended that Monroe City Council not have a remote meeting provided that it is safe for everyone to attend. He did recommend adoption of the legislation in the event a remote meeting becomes necessary.

Mr. Hickman asked how the press and public would be able to attend if Council holds a remote meeting. Mr. Callahan stated that one of the requirements is that the public must be able to listen in. Mr. Callahan did not know how this will be accomplished technologically. He pointed out that staff is already working on how to accomplish this.

Mrs. McElfresh pointed out that we may never have to use it, but if we do we are not trying to get this together at the last minute.

Mayor Frentzel asked if it some Council members can remote in and some attend the meeting in the Council Chambers. Mr. Callahan replied that you can have some remote in and some attend in the Council Chambers.

Mr. Hickman disagrees with this. He felt that the residents can come in the Chambers one at a time if it is necessary.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-12 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-12 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Ordinance No. 2020-12; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Roll call vote: five ayes; one nay (Hickman). Motion carried.

Consideration of Motion to direct that no water shall be shutoff and waiving the penalty of ten percent for unpaid water as set forth in Section 1040.06(c) of the Codified Ordinances until further direction by City Council.

Mr. Brock explained that the City did not do shutoffs last week and sought an agreement from Council to discontinue shutoffs and waive the required penalty for nonpayment temporarily for water. He added that the intent is once the state of emergency is lifted he will have continued discussions with Council when to begin this again.

Mr. Funk moved to direct that no water shall be shutoff and waiving the penalty of ten percent for unpaid water as set forth in Section 1040.06(c) of the Codified Ordinances until further direction by City Council; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Consideration of Motion to prohibit the issuing of solicitation permits until further direction by City Council.

Mr. Brock advised that several requests from the public have been received that we not issue solicitation permits during the state of emergency. Mayor Frentzel asked if this would also suspend current permits.

Mr. Funk moved to prohibit the issuing of new solicitation permits and suspend current solicitation permits until further direction by City Council; seconded by Mrs. Hale. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Consideration of Motion to authorize staff to decrease the enforcement of the sign regulations to permit businesses, such as restaurants, to advertise curbside pickup or delivery of food until further directed by City Council.

Mr. Brock reported that he received a call from Richard's Pizza and asked if the City would allow so that they could still advertise curbside pickup.

Mr. Funk moved to authorize staff to decrease the enforcement of the sign regulations to permit businesses, such as restaurants, to advertise curbside pickup or deliver of food until further directed by City Council; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Consideration of Motion to direct all boards, commissions, and committees, with the exception of City Council, to cease holding meetings unless it is in the best interest of the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Monroe until further direction by City Council.

Mr. Brock indicated this will apply to the strategic comprehensive planning meetings, Planning Commission, Committees of Council, etc.

Mrs. McElfresh asked what if something comes forward and Planning Commission is not permitted to meet for a couple of months. Mr. Brock replied they will have to wait until June.

Mr. Routson stated that last week Planning Commission was supposed to have a meeting and there were three that opted not to attend the meeting. Planning Commission couldn't meet as they did not have a quorum and all of the members are high risk due to age.

Mr. Funk moved to direct all boards, commissions, and committees, with the exception of City Council, to cease holding meeting unless it is in the best interest of the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Monroe until further direction by City Council.

Administrative Reports

Mr. Brock reported that staff is still working on the enforcement portion of the stay at home order and will rely on the Department of Health to assist us. Construction projects continue. Residential infrastructure and home permits are being reviewed to see if those are essential and should continue. We are looking at the impact this pandemic has on our five-year forecast. If the Counties are going to delay payments we need to see how that will impact our budget.

Economic Development is working with the County and the State to work with local businesses to manufacture needed personal protective equipment or other items and to see if we can repurpose some of our businesses to get approval from the State to do those types of things.

The State is looking at legislation now to notify our first responders of those infected with the virus. There are laws in place to protect that information and we want to protect our first responders and to try to get some information of what situation they are going into. The State is also looking to make COVID-19 first responder cases eligible for Bureau of Workers Compensation as well.

We continue to work with the Emergency Management Association (EMA), the Department of Health, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA has new grants and we are eligible for those funds through the EMA. We are also in close contact with local government leaders in the Cincinnati and Dayton area. We are working with labor counsel with the new laws related to the COVID-19 employee leave act.

In response to Mrs. McElfresh's question, Mr. Brock advised that through the local EMA our first responders currently have what they need at this time. We should get more shipments today.

Mr. Frentzel recalls seeing guidelines that fire and police are following and did not recall seeing guidelines for public works. Mr. Brock stated that public works is following the guidelines as everyone else. We are looking at putting them on a rotating schedule if needed.

Mr. Hickman asked if temperatures were taken. Mr. Brock advised that we do not have thermometers and some of the staff have brought some from home. If needed the Fire Department can take the temperature of any of the staff members. We are waiting for thermometers to come in that are on order. Some staff members take them at home before they come in. The staff members taking them at the office are taken in front of one person and a log is kept.

Mr. Funk asked if the City had digital street signs. Mr. Brock advised we have two speed signs that we can put a limited message on. Mr. Funk noticed in other communities they have those signs with positive messages. He thought it would be good to utilize the signs we have to put out something positive.

Mr. Hickman asked if it was estimated how much 1 ³/₄% income tax would bring in rather than the 2% for those working in the City. Mr. Brock stated that he had initially recommended a ¹/₄% across the board and the amount generated was about equal. Mr. Hickman would like to discuss decreasing the tax rate to 1 ³/₄% for everyone rather than 2%. He would rather have a set income tax rather than withholding 2% and then receiving ¹/₂% refund.

Adjournment

Mr. Funk moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The regular meeting of Council adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela S. Wasson, MMC
Clerk of Council