COUNCIL MEETING OF JUNE 6, 2022

The first regular monthly meeting of the Mannington City Council, with Mayor Lora Michael presiding, was held Monday, June 6, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at city hall. Council members attending were Kris Bates, Ken Fletcher, Tim Fluharty and Roger Russell.

The meeting began with a prayer by Jerry Bush, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the last regular meeting were reviewed. Fletcher made the motion to approve the minutes. Bates seconded the motion and all approved.

Visitor Mike Perri of the State Treasurer’s Office outlined several programs offered by that office. He said if council wanted more information on any of the programs to contact him. Mayor Michael said the city recently joined the WV Retirement Plus program.

The winners of the Rain Barrel contest, Avery Smith and Addison Bledsoe, were presented gifts from the city. Their winning drawings will be developed into skins that can be put over the rain barrels by anyone purchasing one. The other winner, Leah Bradley, was not present.

Gary May and several other residents of Sunset Drive said that street and the Hardesty Bridge have been neglected. He said the ditches need cleaned in that area and the bridge is not safe enough for fire trucks and large delivery trucks to cross. Michael thanked them for bringing their concerns to the city’s attention and said she would look for funding to replace the bridge. Scott Riggs said Larry Efaw who lives on Windy Hill Drive by the bridge has offered a section of his property if it is needed for a new bridge.

Freeland Miller said he was present for the Home Rule hearing. Michael said the hearing was on May 6 and the city’s application has already been submitted to the Home Rule Committee. She offered to answer any of Miller’s questions.

In New Business, the resolution supporting the WV veterans was read by the mayor. Fletcher made the motion to adopt the resolution which stated that council supports WV’s veterans and opposes any plan or recommendation that would cause the loss of access to VA facilities or the healthcare services they provide. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

General Fund Budget Revision #4 was explained by City Clerk Michele Fluharty. She said the city recently received a reimbursement check from the trucking company whose truck damaged a downtown light pole plus the check for the tire trailer grant. Russell made the motion to approve Budget Revision #4. Fletcher seconded the motion and it carried.

Tyler Hayes and Andrew Vingino were recommended by Mayor Michael to be employed to man the tire trailer two Saturdays a month. Bates made the motion to hire Hayes and Vingino at $12 an hour on a part time basis to man the tire trailer. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Fluharty asked for authorization to pay $33,936 on the Historic Southside Bridge’s loan principal. She said that money comes from the $3 assessed to all residents’ utility bill. Fletcher made the motion to approve the $33,936 payment on the bridge loan principal. Bates seconded the motion and it carried.

Michael said she is preparing a grant application to the Bowers Family Trust for funding to replace the swinging bridge on Water Street. She asked for council’s approval of the application. Bates made the motion to authorize the Bowers Trust grant application for replacement of the swinging bridge. Russell seconded the motion and all approved.

Code Enforcement Officer Randall Moore reported that the house at 533 Meadow Avenue is now vacant. The city has received several complaints about that property. He also said the Dollar Store appears to be in compliance in regard to their roof drains. Moore said abandoned properties will be his primary focus. He told council there is no need for the city to have an impound yard if they have an ordinance for junked cars. He suggested they ask the city attorney about such an ordinance.

Chief of Police Jim Rigsby said his department received 48 calls in the last two weeks. Mayor Michael asked how many traffic stops were made during that time. Rigsby said those stops didn’t show up in the report from the 911 Center. Four police applicants were recently tested on their physical abilities and all four failed the test. Rigsby said the good thing is that the Academy has moved their next class to January so all four will have time to get into shape and be re-tested. Regarding the city’s vacation policy, he asked if it had been updated and Michael said it had not. A work session will be set to review the current employee handbook. Michael said she has sent two emails asking that gas be pumped by the officers to help save money and Sgt Sides is still using the full-service pumps. Rigsby said he has advised Sides of her emails. Michael said if it continues, she will write up anyone violating her mandate.

Russell said he had received calls about people swimming in the creek and asked if the city had any ordinances pertaining to it. Moore said the waterways are not the responsibility of the city and if the city tries to assume responsibility, it may cause bigger problems.

City Clerk Michele Fluharty said she received notification from the PSC that no protests were filed against the sewer rate increase, and it will be recommended for approval. The city’s Home Rule application was filed this week and the Home Rule Committee acknowledged receipt of the plan. The next committee meeting is on July 16, 2022. Fluharty said she and Mayor Michael reviewed the insurance proposals from Commercial Insurance and WV Corp. Both bids were complete, but WV Corp’s was significantly less than Commercial Insurance.

Fletcher made the motion to pay the outstanding bills. Bates seconded the motion and it carried.

Fluharty made the motion to adjourn. Bates seconded the motion and it carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.