COUNCIL MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2022

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

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance followed by a prayer led by Jerry Bush.

The minutes of the last regular meeting were reviewed. Fletcher made the motion to approve the minutes as read. Russell seconded the motion and it carried.

Tracy & James Six from 314 Highland Street asked why they were singled out to move their flag from the front of their house. They said the city had more important things to worry about. Mayor Michael said the obscenity on the flag was the issue and the City received several complaints about it. Six said they would just change the wording on the flag.

Vern Sechrest and Everett Wolfe were present about the proposed water rate increase.

House of Delegates Member Phil Mallow said he was just visiting to see what was going on in the cities and towns in Marion County.

The first item of Old Business was the second reading and public hearing on Ordinance #472 which implements a 1% sales tax. Bates made the motion to read the heading only. Fletcher seconded the motion and it carried. Michael read the heading. She asked for comments and none were received. Fletcher made the motion to adopt Ordinance #472. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried.

Ordinance #473 which raises the water rates was next on the agenda. Fletcher made the motion to read the heading only. Fluharty seconded the motion and it carried. Michael read the heading. She then asked if there were any comments. Wolfe asked if the city had complained to Fairmont about the smell of the water. Superintendent Ted Nice said Fairmont has a top-notch plant and he rarely receives complaints about the quality of the water. Sechrest said he objects to the fact that your water usage is rounded to the nearest thousand because he says he is paying for services not received. Water Clerk Jennifer Barker was present and said depending on the reading, the usage can be rounded up or down. In the long run, it evens out. Bates made the motion to adopt Ordinance #473. Russell seconded the motion and all approved. The new rates will take effect in 45 days from the date of passage if no protests are received by the PSC.

Craw objected to the fact that “Fire Equipment” is listed under New Business at every meeting and no member of the Fire Department attends. Michael said it is listed in case the Fire Department finds new equipment to purchase that will need council’s approval. If something is found after the agenda is posted, a special meeting would need to be called or they must wait two weeks for the next meeting. If they must wait, it presents the chance that they would miss the opportunity.

In New Business, the invoices from Thrasher Engineering for the Burt Hill Tank Project were reviewed. Council asked why someone from Thrasher was not present to report the progress on the project and answer any questions about the invoices. The invoices were tabled until the next meeting.

Michael said five RFPs were received in response to the city’s ad for an In-House Engineer. The interviews will be held on September 26 starting at 6 p.m.

In department reports, Nice detailed all the jobs they have finished since the last meeting. VanDevender has completed paving all seven of the streets that were scheduled for this fiscal year.

Chief of Police Jim Rigsby distributed copies of the call report for the last two weeks. He reported on the recent PT tests for four candidates for the police department. Two of the four passed the test. The psychological test will be scheduled this week. The status of both Ford cruisers was discussed. Rigsby said the a/c was repaired in the Explorer but there appears to be a problem with the catalytic converter. Michael asked if he has scheduled a second opinion on the converter and Rigsby said not yet. Sgt Don Sides has ordered a back seat for the Taurus cruiser since the police canine chewed up the old one. The chief asked about putting the cage in the front seat for the dog and then there would be room for the prisoners in the back. Michael said she did not think that would be safe for the dog plus a cruiser will be needed for the new part time or full-time officer who will hopefully be hired soon. However, they will take Rigsby’s suggestion under consideration. She also said the City of Clarksburg has a used cruiser that they offered to Mannington, but they are not ready to take it out of service yet. Rigsby also said he has received complaints about the 25-mph speed limit sign on Sycamore Road and the fact that VanDevender paved Harry Vaughan’s driveway with leftover asphalt. Nice said Vaughn let the paving company use water at his house when they paved Willow Street by his house and as a tradeoff, they put some asphalt on his driveway.

City Clerk Michele Fluharty said she received notification that the 2022 audit of the City’s workers’ comp account will result in a refund of approximate $2,000. She also reported that the new account for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has been opened.

Mayor Michael said deeds for the properties at 302 Buffalo Street and Lot 12 in Sycamore were received so the city can proceed with their demolition. She also read a letter from the Mannington Fair Board thanking the City for their assistance during this year’s fair.

Mallow urged everyone to read about the four amendments on this year’s ballot. He praised the mayor and council on the way they conduct their meetings.

The outstanding bills were reviewed. Fluharty made the motion to pay the bills as presented. Craw seconded the motion and it carried.

Fluharty made the motion to adjourn. Bates seconded the motion and all approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.